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THE CAPUCHINS

VOLUME TWO

FATHER CUTHBERT, O.S.F.C.

THE CAPUCHINS

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE HISTORY OF THE COUNTER-REFORMATION

VOLUME TWO

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CHAPTER IX

THE CAPUCHINS EVANGELISE FRANCE AND SAVOY

(i)

Of Père Honoré de Champigny[1] the Capuchins of Paris have always been more proud than of any of the remarkable men who, at this period and for some years later, made the Paris friary a centre of attraction ; and this is to the friars' credit as men of a religious profession. For Honoré's pre-eminence was due to his excelling sanctity. Not that he lacked natural qualities of mind and character which in any case would have made his company desirable in a community ; he had in an uncommon degree that calm sagacity which wins trust and confidence where more brilliant qualities often fail ; and for that reason, probably, he was never allowed from the day he was ordained priest to efface himself in the humbler duties of an ordinary friar's life, but in offices of authority continually had to bear the burden of the lives of others. He was a mystic by nature as by grace ; but one of those practical mystics in whom knowledge of the world and the ways of men blend with their searching consciousness of God and the life of the spirit. And with all his gifts for the ruling of men he had the child-like heart which looks to see the good in all things ; the world never soured him, nor did experience mar his cheerful simplicity. His was the earnestness of the unspoilt child. Some friars on their journey once called at the friary of Nancy when he was guardian there. It was a Friday, a day always sacred to Honoré as the day of our Lord's death. They were garrulous

[1] A " Life " of Père Honoré was published at Paris in 1549 by P. Henry de Calais—*Histoire de la vie, mort et miracles du R. P. Honoré Bochart de Champigny*, with a view to the introduction of his cause for canonisation. Owing mainly to the political troubles in France, the cause was not formally " introduced " at Rome until 1870. The process is still in being. cf. E. Mazelin : *Histoire du Vénérable Serviteur de Dieu le P. Honoré de Paris* (Paris, 1882).

with the gossip of the road. Honoré looked at them and reminded them that it was more becoming to observe the day of our Lord's death with silence and penitence than with idle gossip. The simplicity with which he said it shamed their forgetfulness and on their return to their own friary they declared that the guardian of Nancy was a saint. Everyone loved him though his simple integrity somewhat awed them. One may recall an incident when he was preaching a Lenten course in the town of Orange where the Huguenots were a power. The governor, himself a Huguenot, was to make his entry into the city and a contention arose as to whether the Catholic clergy or the Huguenot magistrates should be given the place of honour in the procession. The Huguenots at length declared that the question should be decided by the Capuchin preacher, whose decision they would accept. Honoré gracefully returned the compliment ; it was, he said, for the governor to decide such a matter ; and the governor decided in favour of the clergy. It was a notable achievement in those days of carping hostility. There was a day too, in Flanders, whither Honoré had been sent as visitor of the friaries in that country. With some companions he was making the journey by boat and was about to alight on the river bank when they found themselves in the presence of a posse of Calvinist soldiers in arms against the Spaniard. The friars at once put off again from the bank, but Honoré himself was seized and roughly bidden prepare for the gallows. In his heart he rejoiced that he might die for the Faith he loved—loyalty to one's Faith was veritably a soldier's loyalty in those days. But amongst the Calvinists he espied a French Huguenot. " My friend," Honoré remarked good-humouredly, " to be a mere Frenchman is evidently no safeguard in this country." At once the Huguenot claimed him as a compatriot and led him away to safety ; and at that Honoré felt chagrined ; he had lost his expected martyrdom ! Yet this was the man who was sought after by people of position in the world's affairs, to be their spiritual guide and counsellor. Four times was Honoré elected Provincial of the Paris Capuchins after Henri IV had gained the crown ; and for three years he governed the friars in Lorraine ; and under his rule the Order grew in strength and there began that marvellous activity and missionary

enterprise of which we are about to speak. He was ably seconded in the administration at Paris by Léonard Favre—the seigneur de Querquifirian of the *Penitents Gris*—who outlived him by many years and is regarded by the Paris Capuchins as the greatest of their administrators.[2] Less of a mystic than Honoré de Champigny, he had more of the statesmanlike quality, a bolder if not a more penetrating genius in what appertained to the destiny of the Order. He was five times Provincial of Paris. It was under his administration that the Paris " Missions " both at home and abroad attained their widespread development ; it was he, too, who forced the Roman authorities to give the Order an international, as opposed to a purely Italian, central government, and refused to take part in any General Chapter in which the representatives of the Provinces were not free to speak freely and vote according to their conscience.[3]

Honoré de Champigny and Léonard Favre were in truth the worthy captains of the Paris Province during the first thirty years and more of the seventeenth century ; and they captained as remarkable a company as could be found anywhere in Christendom at that time. Take but the more illustrious of the band : Ange de Joyeuse, Benoît de Canfield, Joseph le Clerc, Yves de Paris, Zacharie de Lisieux, Athanase Molé—men whom the whole nation regarded with awe or respect ; with them you must place that group of bold adventurers into unknown lands, Yves d'Evreux, Pacifique de Provins, Claude d'Abbeville and those sturdy warriors of the Lord, Archange de Pembroke, Ange de Raconis, Laurent de Paris, Eusèbe de Merlon, Raphael de Dieppe and Jean-Baptiste d'Avranches. But behind these were those numerous companies who spread rapidly throughout the north and west of France so that in almost every city and town there was to befound a Capuchin friary, whilst other companies went beyond the seas to win new lands to the Faith they loved. It was a marvellous body of men of energy, directed by leaders of large vision and indomitable strength of soul. To tell their story as it should be told would require

[2] " *Cette lumière séraphique qui a été sur le chandelier de l'Ordre pendant quarante ans, le grand homme* " (*Eloges historiques*, MS., cit., fol. 177).

[3] See the documentary evidence in *Le Chapeau cardinalice du P. Joseph* by P. Apollinaire de Valence (Nimes, 1894).

leisure and opportunity which are not mine ; nor could it be told within the limits set by this book. Here I can but indicate their labours as in barest outline, and do no more than suggest the quality of the men.

It was in the spirit of Franciscan chivalry that they spread themselves out, counting no cost so that they might gain to Christ His Kingdom, even though it might mean for them the martyr's death. A few of them did die at the hands of the Huguenots, and one was eaten by savages in the Caribbean isles. A whole community perished at Calais in 1625, by poison said to have been administered by some Huguenots.[4] Occasionally preachers were murdered in localities where passion ran high. Thus Père Jerome de Condrieu was brutally butchered by Huguenots near Privas in Languedoc in 1629, during the rebellion of the duc de Rohan.[5] Such instances of extreme violence were exceptional, but sufficient to put a violent death amongst the contingencies to be faced. But if violent deaths came seldom, hardship and arduous labour and incessant solicitude were a daily portion ; and to the external labours was joined the unmitigated severity of the Capuchin life. As we follow them in their varied activities as preachers, writers and missionaries, we must not forget the home life in which they were trained for their ministry. The author of the *Chronologie Historique*, who knew these men, tells us that at the time when Ange de Joyeuse and his friends became Capuchins, " the ancient fathers of the Province of Paris lived in very great austerity of life, and a sublime poverty showed in all their ways ; the quest brought them in nothing great ; sometimes they went for more than six weeks without eating flesh or fish ; often drinking water for lack of wine."

Probably this extreme lack of even the necessaries of life was due to the wars during which the religious houses suffered severely, and even many abbeys became impoverished. But the chronicles witness to the fervent severity with which the French Capuchins continued to observe the

[4] Marcellinus de Pise, *Annales Ord. Cap.* III, p. 132 ; *Bullar. Ord. Cap.* V p. 27.

[5] *Bullar. Ord. Cap.* VII. cf. Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., II, p. 346. See the account of his death given in an edited manuscript by Jacques de Bannes quoted in *Essai sur les origines monastiques dans le diocèse de Valence* (Valence, 1881), p. 99, *seq.* The name of the author is not given.

Rule and constitutions of the Order ; and as we shall see throughout this period of almost incredible external activity, the French Capuchins were acknowledged masters in the ways of the interior life and of mystical prayer.

Their first campaign was to revive the Faith amongst the indifferent Catholic masses and to rescue the country from the grip of the Calvinist heresy. To this purpose they began to organise their Home Missions immediately after the peace of 1596. In 1608 Ange de Joyeuse, during his brief provincialate,[6] obtained from the Pope missionary faculties for the preachers to absolve and reconcile heretics to the Church ; and other concessions to facilitate their missionary activities. He claimed in fact all the faculties granted to preachers in missionary countries.[7] Hitherto, in accordance with the constitutions of their Order, the Capuchins had refrained from hearing confessions and administering the sacraments to the laity. In 1602 Clement VIII had indeed permitted the Definitor General of the Order to grant temporary licences to the preachers to hear confessions ; but it was with reluctance these licences were issued ; it was feared that if the friars became confessors the Order would gradually lose its contemplative character ; nor do the Italian superiors seem to have been able to realise the actual conditions in France and other nominally Catholic countries where the Church was still in real jeopardy.[8] Certainly so far as France was concerned the General Superiors, as events proved, need not have feared that the contemplative aspect of the Capuchin vocation would be lost sight of. Yet the hesitation was an honourable evidence of fidelity to the primitive Capuchin ideal.

They were prodigious workers those Capuchin missioners, setting no bounds to the zeal that urged them on. There was for instance Père Palémon, who laboured in Artois ; he would preach three or four times in the day and assemble the poor and the simple folk in the streets to instruct them in the faith.[9] And too, Eusèbe d'Embrun who traversed Picardy, preaching in six or seven villages or hamlets a day—

[6] He died that year at Ripoli in Italy as he was returning from the General Chapter.

[7] *Histoire des Capucins*, op. cit., p. 184, *seq.*

[8] *De confessione saecularium in ordine nostro* in *Anal. Ord. Cap.*, XIX, p. 251, *seq.*

[9] *Bibl. Script. Ord.*, p. 205.

until his superiors forbade him to preach more than thrice in a day. He loved the country folk : he would gather the peasants around him and teach them the Catechism ; he was assiduous in visiting the sick, and when preaching in the towns he did not fail to visit the prisons. The people called him " the holy missionary." He died on a Friday at the hour our Lord died on the Cross, at the age of thirty-three.[10] Of such sort were these men who soon became known in almost every city and town of France and amongst the country folk from Normandy to the Lyonnais and from Picardy to Languedoc. The more notable preachers did not confine themselves to one province but not infrequently were found preaching throughout the kingdom, sometimes beyond. Thus Jerome de Laurens, a noted preacher of Lyons, laboured in Provence and Languedoc, and even in Flanders. He was notable not only as a preacher but as a scholar ; his knowledge of the Scriptures and the Fathers made him a redoubtable antagonist in his disputes with the Huguenots. Henri IV more than once nominated him to a bishopric, but he steadfastly refused the honour ; his heart was in his missionary labours. When in 1617 he was drowned in a storm whilst crossing from Martiques to Marseilles, his obsequies were solemnly performed in a number of the cathedrals of Languedoc and Dauphiné, so keenly was his loss felt.[11]

Then there was Père Ange d'Abra de Raconis : a Huguenot by birth, his family had narrowly escaped death on St. Bartholomew's Eve. In his youth he had thrown himself into religious controversy against the Catholics until he found himself a convinced Catholic. By public conferences and sermons he afterwards brought many Huguenots into the Church ; one of them was his nephew, Charles-François de Raconis, the brilliant lecturer in philosophy at the Sorbonne, and later bishop of Lavour. His sister, after her conversion, was the friend of Madame Acarie, the reformer of the French

[10] Marcellinus de Pise, op. cit., p. 153 ; *Bibl. Script. Ord.*, p. 82 ; *Eloges Historiques* (MS. cit.), XXI.

[11] Marcellinus de Pise, op. cit., p. 93 ; *Bibl. Script. Ord.*, p. 115. See the charming account of the home life of the de Laurens family written by Père Jerome's sister, Jeanne : *Une famille au xvi siècle*, ed. Charles de Ribbe (Paris, 1867). Two of Jerome's brothers were archbishops respectively of Embrun and Arles ; another brother was physician to Henri IV.

Carmelites. Amongst other adventures for the Faith, Père Ange worked for a time in London, as chaplain to the French embassy.[12]

But of all the Capuchin preachers in Paris Père Athanase Molé perhaps was held in special reverence ; his memory was kept green, until the great revolution, by the *Maddalenette*, the home he caused to be founded for unfortunate women ; the first organised attempt to deal with a great evil in the city.[13] A lovable character he must have been, utterly unconscious of any merit in the work he did, and living only for others. "They say," said Jean Estienne to Père Athanase, " that you do marvels in converting these sad Huguenots." " It is true many come to me and change their religion," replied Athanase, "but it is the good God Who converts them." Jean Estienne, secretary of the chamber of the king, himself afterwards became one of his converts. " He was a man of great wisdom," he wrote, " of sweet and ready conversation."[14]

Nor may we leave unnamed the Hebrew scholar, Père Séraphin de Rouen, who is said to have converted three thousand Huguenots in Normandy during his apostolate of fourteen years.[15]

These tell us something of the quality of the increasing army of Capuchins who took their place in the front line of the Catholic offensive for the recovery of the Church in France.

Nor were these missioners content merely with the spoken word ; they wielded the pen and wielded it vigorously. Written in the heat of the fray, much of this controversial literature was of ephemeral value ; it was not meant for the student's bookshelf, but for the platform. Probably nobody to-day, at least outside Northern Ireland, would be seriously interested in the book of Père Silvestre de Laval in

[12] Cyprian de Gamachus : *Mémoires de la Mission des Capucins près la Reyne d'Angleterre*, ed. Apollinaire de Valence (Paris, 1881), p. 205, *seq.* ; *Bibl. Script. Ord.*, p. 15 ; cf. Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., I, p. 167, *seq.*

[13] From small beginnings the *Maddalenette* quickly grew into two large institutions.

[14] See J. Estienne's account of his own conversion : *Traité de la conversion de Jean Estienne, Secret. de la chambre du Roy* (Paris, 1621), quoted in Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit. I, p. 173 ; Villecholle, *Récit d'un grand nombre d'hérétiques convertis par le R. P. Athanase Molé, Capucin* (Paris, 1624), *ibid.*, II, p. 363.

[15] *Bibl. Script. Ord.*, p. 228.

defence of the papacy "against those who denounce the Pope as anti-Christ,"[16] but it did its work. The rapid sale of some of these books proves that there were readers awaiting them. A voluminous work of Père Raphael de Dieppe, an apologia for the faith against all heretics, went through several editions, and in more compendious form was issued especially for Huguenot readers.[17] Père Raphael finished his career as a missionary in the wilds of New England.

Yet it must be remembered that their campaign against the Huguenot heresy was but part of the larger campaign for the renewal of the Faith in the kingdom. The saddest thing of all in France at that time was the widespread ignorance and indifference in regard to religion on the part of large masses who nominally were Catholics; and this was largely the result of the spiritual inefficiency of the body of the clergy. The refusal of the French monarchy to recognise the reform decrees of the Council of Trent had kept in being the flagrant abuses within the clerical estate, which had so much contributed to the Protestant revolt. In the petitions of the French bishops to the Holy See to allow the Capuchins to hear confessions, the reason invariably given was the fewness of competent confessors.[18] If only the Catholic clergy had been as earnest as the Huguenot ministers, it was said, there would have been no Calvinism in France. The wholesale destruction of churches by the Huguenots, wherever they obtained ascendancy, had, moreover, left large bodies of Catholics without any aid of religious rites. After the war of the Ligue, indifference to religion amongst the masses had become an almost greater danger to the Church in France than was the Calvinist teaching.

With these nominal Catholics the Capuchin method was simple and effective. The preachers instructed the people in their religion, and taught them to pray. It was the same method which had already proved so effective in Italy. A Capuchin mission usually included the Forty Hours' adoration;[19] frequently it began with it; in that atmosphere of

[16] *Bibl. Script. Ord.*, p. 231.

[17] *Methode très facile pour convaincre tout forte d'hérétique et particulièrement les modernes* (Rouen & Paris, 1640). The compendium was published in 1645. *Bibl. Script. Ord. Cap.*, op. cit., p. 220. cf. Pellegrino da Forli: *Annali dell' Ordine dei FF. Min. Cappuccini* (Milano, 1882), I, p. 230, *seq.*

[18] cf. *De confessione saecularium*, loc. cit. [19] See *supra*, p. 162 and p. 205.

prayer the preacher appealed to the mind and heart of his audience. Religious processions and pilgrimages to the ancient shrines not infrequently entered into the scheme of the mission ; they were an appeal to the lingering memories of the past, as well as a natural expression of religious feeling.[20] These Capuchins understood human nature. Yet they were far from being content with the mere expression. One of the notable features in their apostolate was their insistence on mental prayer as a foundation of true religious piety ; mind and heart must go with the outward expression. It was mainly the missionaries—writing to support their preaching —who produced the numerous books on mental prayer which figure so largely in the *bibliotheca* of Capuchin writers during the Counter-Reformation period.

Doubtless, as contemporary writers universally declare, the austerity, poverty and simplicity of life of the Capuchins did much to gain them a hearing ; their own life gave to their appeal the needful note of sincerity as much with the Huguenots as with the Catholics. In the Huguenot West, as elsewhere, it was to the missions meant primarily for the Catholics, that the numerous conversions of the Huguenots were mainly due. After all, especially amongst the simpler folk many, perhaps most, had adhered to the Calvinist conventicle because religion there seemed a more living thing than in the parish church. When Catholicism came again before them as a vital thing they easily returned to it. Gladly they accepted bread where hitherto they had found but stones. It seems clear, too, that the Capuchins as a body won the respect of the mass of the Huguenots and were received by them with more tolerance than was usually accorded to the religious orders.[21]

(ii)

By 1613 the Capuchin missionaries had spread into almost every province of France. The Cardinal of Lorraine noting

[20] Yves de Paris, keen analyst of human nature, refers with wistful appreciation to the processions which entered into the Capuchin mission. *Les heureux succés*, p. 660 ; cf. *infra*, chap. xiv.

[21] Amongst other evidences is the request of Louis XIII that Capuchins be sent to Le Vigan in Languedoc. He gave as a reason "*que communément ils sont reçus des hugenoths avec moindre aversion que plusiers autres.*" *Histoire des Capucins*, op. cit., p. 211.

this fact in a letter to the governor of Rheims wrote : " not in one place but in divers provinces and cities of the kingdom they labour with ardent zeal and charity to bring about the salvation of the souls of the faithful ; and by instructions and persuasive sermons, as well as by the example of their holy life, have so succeeded that the fruits of their harvest daily become manifest to all eyes."[22] They were particularly active in the provinces where the Catholic Faith was in greatest danger. They had spread over Normandy, where Père Jean-Baptiste d'Avranches, theologian and Greek scholar, had proved himself a persuasive controversialist ;[23] they had penetrated into the Dauphiné, Guienne and into the Huguenot stronghold in Poitou. In the Dauphiné they had as leaders Père Marcellin du Pont-Beauvoisin, " the apostle of the Dauphiné " as he came to be styled ; and Père Etienne de Tende, who with his associates evangelised the valley of Château-Dauphiné.[24] But in the Dauphiné it was more easy to convert Huguenots than to arouse the indifferent Catholics. When in 1611 Charles-Salomon Duserre, Bishop of Gap, invited the Capuchins to come and restore Catholicism in his diocese, Père Michel-Ange d'Avignon, during a Lenten course in the cathedral brought back to the Faith forty-four Huguenots, leading men in the city ; but it took Père Marcel de Carpentras and his associates who followed at Gap seven years to bring the Catholics to a sense of their religious duty. Yet the people can hardly be blamed: it was the inefficiency of the local clergy which had let them sink into their indifference.[25]

In the West we meet with that enigmatic genius, Père Joseph le Clerc du Tremblay, who first appears as an active figure in history in the mission field of Poitou. It is not here we shall pause to consider his multiple activities. For the moment we introduce him to the reader as the strenuous visionary worker and organiser of the Capuchin missions in Poitou and its adjoining territories. He enters

[22] *Bullar. Ord. Cap.* V, p. 59.

[23] Père Jean-Baptiste was of humble birth and had worked himself to fame when he was invited by Clement VIII to Rome to codify the Greek manuscripts in the Vatican library. Whilst thus engaged he became acquainted with the Capuchins and entered the Order. Marcellinus de Pise, op. cit., p. 76, *seq.* ; *Bibl. Script.*, p. 140.

[24] *Bibl. Script. Ord.*, p. 177.

[25] cf. G. Fagniez : *Le Père Joseph et Richelieu* (Paris, 1894), I. p. 296, *seq.*

on the scene at Saumur in 1606 in the course of a preaching tour. He had been a priest two years, and like many of the missionaries, had taught theology before he became a missioner. At Saumur he came into controversy with Duplessis-Mornay, governor of the town—he who had written a book on the Mass ; and it was indicative of Père Joseph's future career that in Saumur, under the nose of this *Pape des Huguenots*, he founded a Capuchin friary.[26] From that beginning Père Joseph began to take an ever-deepening interest in the religious problems of the West. The situation was difficult for Catholicism. Many of the higher nobility were Huguenots and most of the land was farmed or owned by Huguenots ; and the tenants followed the religion of the land-holders. As in the Dauphiné and wherever the Huguenots had long dominated, the Catholics were sunk in religious indifference or tepidity. Under the leadership of Père Joseph, Capuchin missions were established in Poitou, Niort, Saint-Maxence and Loudon ; camping-places of men inspired by an enthusiasm similar to his own.

But this was only the preparation. In 1617 Père Joseph launched the organised missionary enterprise, largely the creation of his own mind, which was to be carried out by an *élite* corps of specially chosen friars. The immediate objective was Poitou ; shortly it extended to other provinces.

These new missions were organised on an intensive war footing and armed with every missionary faculty, and dependent on the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office,[27] so that the missionaries once sent could not be recalled without the permission of the Congregation ; in other words they were " apostolic missionaries " like the missionaries sent to the Indies and lands of the infidels ; but it is to be noticed that they had a special faculty not needed amongst the infidels, that of absolving priests guilty of simony. Père Joseph was appointed superior of the mission. At first this missionary band numbered six friars ; in a short time it increased to twenty.

[26] G. Fagniez, p. 283, *seq.*

[27] After 1622 these missions came under the jurisdiction of the newly-established Congregation of Propaganda Fide.

The work was solemnly inaugurated on Christmas Day at Lusignan. It began with the Forty Hours' adoration; then followed sermons and conferences. From the neighbouring country crowds came to listen to the missioners ; the churches proved inadequate to hold the congregations and the mission had to be conducted in the open air. As it was at Lusignan so it was at Thouars where the Huguenot duc de la Trémoille ruled, and at Odet. At Thouars the mission was marked by a resumption of the ancient pilgrimage to the sanctuary of Notre-Dame des Ardilleurs at Saumur. Such was the immediate success that new missionaries had to be at once recruited. During the first ten years of this Apostolic Mission the conversions amongst the Huguenots were estimated at fifty thousand. Amongst the Catholics there was a veritable revival of faith ; and at the same time there came a change in the lives of the clergy, numbers of whom were aroused to a sense of their priestly vocation and pastoral duty.[28]

A similar Apostolic Mission was undertaken by the friars of Languedoc in 1619; and in 1629 another, manned by friars from Provence, invaded the Cevennes.[29]

The Languedoc Mission had for its objective Béarn within the shadow of the Pyrenees. The missionaries were chosen from the most pious and learned members of the Languedoc communities ; for Père Daniel de Saint-Sever did not underrate the intellectual and polemical ability of the Huguenot ministers of the kingdom once ruled by Jeanne d'Albret. Jeanne might be heartless, but she was fastidious as to the intellectual quality of her Calvinist ministry. Père Daniel was himself a scholar ; he was a doctor in theology and was reputed for his knowledge of oriental languages.[30] Amongst his associates were Père Simon de Mont-de-Marsen, of whom the chronicler of the Guienne Capuchins writes : "he was a man of fascinating conversation, loved and honoured by the great, strong and powerful in controversy : he gained a great reputation in Béarn, particularly in Pau, where he was generally esteemed by great and lowly, by Catholics and Protestants alike."[31] Another was Père Pascal de Tarbes,

[28] cf. *Relatio generalis Pictaviensis PP. Capuccinorum* (Roma, 1888), a report sent to the S. C. of Propaganda in 1629 giving the number of conversions down to 1628 ; cf. Fagniez, loc. cit., I, p. 292.

[29] cf. *Histoire des Capucins*, op. cit., I, p. 184, *seq.*

[30] *ibid.*, II, p. 272.

[31] *ibid.*, p. 324.

learned in Canon Law and at one time the idolised leader of the students in the university of Toulouse ; noble and generous in disposition but a redoubtable debater.[32]

For nigh on sixty years Calvinism had ruled in that mountain-shadowed kingdom of Béarn since Jeanne d'Albret with bloody hand introduced the reformed religion amongst her subjects. Hers is a brutal story of a brutal age. In Béarn now part of France since Henry of Navarre became his Christian Majesty, the provisions of the Edict of Nantes granting Catholics in Huguenot territories liberty of conscience had been even more ignored than in other Huguenot strongholds. The bishops under the king's protection had returned to their dioceses, but theirs were dioceses with hardly a church and with but few priests. In their need the bishops called in the Jesuits and Capuchins to succour their flock and reorganise the Church.

Père Daniel preached the Advent sermons in Pau in 1619 : the church was little more than a shed, but half-roofed. It was the first time a priest had publicly preached in Pau for fifty years. When he passed on to organise the mission in other centres, he left in Pau Père Simon de Mont-Marsan to carry on the work. Two years later when Louis XIII visited the town in his progress through Béarn, the inhabitants petitioned that a Capuchin friary should be established there, and with the king's aid a church and friary were built. It was the beginning of numerous Capuchin settlements in the Huguenot-ridden territories bordered by the Pyrenees ; settlements which everywhere marked the progress of the Capuchin effort to win back the country to the Catholic Faith.

(iii)

Yet in those early years of the seventeenth century the religious effort in France was far from exhausting itself in the struggle between Catholicism and the Huguenots. As elsewhere—in Italy and Spain for instance—Catholic piety had awakened to a new and deeper life and had cast off the sterilising depression which had weighed it down a century before. The early dawn of the Catholic Reform movement

[32] *ibid.*, p. 379.

had given place to the vigour and labour of the day, a day alive with definite movement and absorbing purpose. The Catholic spirit was awake ; it had cast off the nightmare of its helplessness in the clutch of a rampant worldliness and advancing heresy. No longer did it feel helpless, but was buoyant with the self-confidence of its renewed youth ; and in nothing more clearly did this confidence show itself than in the new mystical piety which had already renovated the religious life of Italy and cast a golden haze over the Church in Spain, and was now working for the regeneration of Catholic life in France. As it was in the mystical piety inspired by the contemplation of the Sacred Humanity of our Lord that the Faith was reborn in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, so now did it receive a new life from the new mystical piety of Christ's nuptials with the souls of His true followers

Its appearance in France—as also elsewhere—was ushered in by a reform of the cloister. In Italy it was in the cloisters both of men and women that the flame of the new piety and reform had blazed up ; in Spain, St. Theresa had eclipsed in renown St. Peter of Alcantara and even St. John of the Cross ; in France " the great abbesses," if they did not lead the movement, yet are as outshining stars in its firmament. No history of the religious revival in France can fail to tell of Madame Acarie and the reform of Carmel ; of Marie de Beavilliers, Marguerite d'Arbouze, Madeleine de Sourdis, Antoinette d'Orléans and the Benedictine reforms of Montmartre, Val-de-Grace, Saint-Paul-de-Beauvais, and Calvary.[33] These reforms were social events in the religious life of France ; their influence was felt far outside the cloister. And in the working out of these cloistral reforms all that was most vigorous in the new spiritual France came together ; Jesuits and Oratorians, rare spirits of the new type of secular clergy, Carthusians, reformed Benedictines ; and with them the Capuchins.

Amongst the earliest counsellors of Madame Acarie was Benoît de Canfield. It was he who in the strange ways by which she was set apart from the world of fashion, discerned the leading of the Divine Spirit. But it was more particularly with the reform of the Benedictine nunneries that the

[33] cf. Henri Bremond : *Histoire Littéraire du Sentiment Religieux en France*, II:

Capuchins were concerned. These nunneries, many of them, had become little more than comfortable clubs, eminently respectable but lacking the conventual spirit, still more lacking the Benedictine spirit of self-sacrifice and contemplative prayer. The nuns had their private incomes, and their separate tables to which they invited their friends ; the Divine Service was part of the routine of the day, it was hardly the engrossing occupation of their life ; they did not mingle in the outside world, but the world had a great freedom of entrance into the abbey. That was the state of things which the new mystical piety came to remedy.

The reform of the Benedictine nunneries began at the abbey of Montmartre in Paris. The nuns of Montmartre had a good name for regularity of religious life until the wars of religion had reduced to poverty so many of the abbeys and churches of France. It was the poverty of the common life that had led the nuns to seek a greater comfort in the retention of their own incomes for their personal use ; whilst the general social demoralisation caused by the wars had led to laxity of religious observance. In 1597 Marie de Beavilliers, a nun of the abbey of Beaumont-les-Tours, was appointed abbess of Montmartre ; she was but twenty-three years of age, but had been a professed nun for seven years. At Beaumont, Marie de Beavilliers had been unhappy with the highly respectable but easy-going observance, she had longed for the stricter life of the true Benedictine community. At Montmartre the coarser worldliness of the nuns offended even lax Beaumont. Strange though it may seem, Montmartre sheltered two souls of exquisite saintliness, Catherine and Marie Alvequin, who later were to reform the Augustinian Penitents of Paris : to these the coming of Marie de Beavilliers seemed God's answer to their prayers. But no sooner did the young abbess show her determination to restore order and insist on regular observance than the community rose in rebellion and as decidedly refused to obey. At this point Père Benoît de Canfield comes on the scene. Marie de Beavilliers took him as her director and counsellor. Père Benoît already was reputed a master in the spiritual life and many sought his counsel. But if Marie de Beavilliers expected him to assist her at once to reform her community, she was quickly disillusioned. Instead,

this master-mystic put the abbess herself to school, to learn the ways of the Lord ; during the year she was under Père Benoît's direction she was set to learn to govern herself in the hard way of the mystical life. The account of the conferences in which the director schooled the abbess shows us Père Benoît initiating his disciple into the mysteries of the divine union of the soul with God ; long silences interrupting the discourse when, caught up into the mystery, Père Benoît sat motionless and in rapture of spirit. Thus began that mystical revival which eventually was to make Montmartre a nursery of mystics, and through the reformers sent out to reform other nunneries, to spread far and wide the pure white flame of mystical piety. At the end of a year Père Benoît relinquished his charge as the director of Marie de Beavilliers, to return to his native England as a missionary; but he left with her a treatise that was to be amongst the most cherished works on which the mystical revival of the seventeenth century was fed during many years, his book *Le Règle du Perfection.*[34] Before his departure from Paris, he commended the spiritual care of Montmartre to Père Ange de Joyeuse, and it was during the two years that he directed the community that the rebellion was subdued and the greater part of the nuns became the whole-hearted disciples of the abbess. Benoît de Canfield had formed the spiritual life of the Abbess ; Ange de Joyeuse set himself to win over the community ; his combined firmness and affability gained the victory.

From Montmartre the reform spread to the abbey of Val-de-Grace when Marguerite d'Arbouze, a disciple of Marie de Beavilliers, was appointed abbess of that royal abbey; and amongst Marguerite's most intimate counsellors was the venerable Honoré de Champigny. When shortly after she assumed the government, the abbey was transferred to Saint-Jacques in Paris, Père Honoré, then Provincial, appointed the Master of the Capuchin Novices to give regular conferences to the nuns, and especially to instruct them in mental prayer.

Père Honoré had already been instrumental in bringing about the reform of the priory of Saint-Louis de Vernon, and of the abbey of Montvilliers in Normandy. Still

[34] cf. *infra,* chapter xiv.

earlier in 1607, he had stood valiantly by Madeleine de Sourdis in her reform of Saint-Paul-les-Beauvais. Madeleine de Sourdis was cousin to Marie de Beavilliers and with her had taken the nun's veil at Beaumont-les-Tours. Hardly had she arrived at Saint-Paul-les-Beauvais when Père Honoré made her acquaintance, and at once recognised the high character and deep spirituality which was to place her amongst the great reforming abbesses of the time. Père Honoré had long prayed for the reform of Saint-Paul, to whose generosity the Capuchins of Beauvais owed much, and now in holy conspiracy with the young abbess, he began frequently to preach to the nuns urging them to a stricter observance of their Rule and teaching them the ways of the interior life. His exhortations had their effect. On 8 June, 1607, the nuns assembled in Chapter unanimously resolved to give up their private incomes and accept the common life. That was the beginning. Before long Saint-Paul was a model Benedictine community.[35]

His next act was to overcome the scruples of the saintly Etienne Carion, chaplain of Beauvais Cathedral, to undertake the spiritual direction of the community. In his solicitous care for the Reform, Père Honoré associated with himself Benoît de Canfield, who, after several years imprisonment in England, had been expelled from the country and had returned to Paris, and, too, Ange de Joyeuse and that other master of the spiritual life—also an Englishman—Père Archange de Pembroke. Like Montmartre and Val-de-Grace, Saint-Paul quickly became a centre of the spiritual life of France ; there as on common ground and drawn by a common sympathy met the religious forces that were working for the spiritual regeneration of the country.

Hardly less remarkable was the congregation of reformed Benedictines of Notre-Dame du Calvaire, founded in 1617 by Madame Antoinette d'Orléans, daughter of Léonor, duc de Longueville, under the direction of Père Joseph du Tremblay. The formation and spiritual development of this congregation was one of the life interests of that many-sided genius ; and his spiritual conferences to the Filles du

35 *Histoire des Bénédictines de l'Abbaye de Saint-Paul* (Archives de Beauvais) quoted by F. Mazelin, op. cit., p. 140.

Calvaire would alone have given him a place in the history of religion in France.[36]

It is in truth difficult to over-estimate the part played by these reformed nunneries in the making of the new spiritual France. They drew their mystical fervour from all that was most vigorous in the religious life around them, and in turn transmitted their own renewed piety through the length and breadth of the country ; not only in the cloisters but in the court and the châteaux from which their numbers were recruited. The reform of the nunneries was in fact as much apostolic work as was the conversion of the Huguenots and the uplifting of the faith of the Catholic masses.

(iv)

In that revival of mystical piety which was the spiritual backbone of the Catholic Reformation movement, not only in France but throughout Catholic Christendom, the Capuchins worked indefatigably. Their achievement in this respect is indeed their chief claim to a remembrance in history. But of that we shall speak elsewhere ; as also of the new peril to the Catholic Faith into which the Capuchins were drawn when they had hardly won their spurs in the struggle with the Huguenots—the peril of Jansenism.

For the moment we will follow them in another of their adventures, their services to the sick in the years of the dread pestilence which swept over France at the beginning of the second quarter of the century. It came to add yet greater misery to a people harassed by wars and struggling under the economic distress caused by the wars and the general disturbance of the kingdom ; and the suddenness with which it struck now in one district and now in another added to the terror. Many were the Capuchins who died at their posts of duty during the scourge ; many more were those who volunteered to fill the gaps caused by death in the brave service of the stricken populations ; and in after years it was not forgotten how in every district at the news of an outbreak the Capuchins were among the first to give their services. Amongst those who died, victims of their charity, was the great-hearted Père Alfonse de Rouen. His had been a long

[36] cf. H. Bremond, II, p. 187, *seq.*

record of service in the care of the sick in the ever recurring epidemics, when in 1633 news came to him of the sore straits of the town of Orange. He at once set out on the long road from Normandy. Four hundred lay stricken in the hospital on his arrival in the town ; and the whole place was in mourning. Day and night he laboured by the beds of the sick and dying, both as priest and nurse, till in sheer pity the townspeople, Huguenots as well as Catholics, took charge of him who had no thought for himself, and plied him with gifts of food and comforts—most of which, however, went to the needy poor. When the worst was over at Orange, news came that his native city was now in the grip of the plague. Worn out as he was, he returned to Rouen and with two other Capuchins took charge of the hospital. But two months later he himself was stricken and died ; and shortly after his two companions fell sick and died also.[37] Of similar fame was Père Bernardine de Chaumont, who after serving the stricken people of Montbeliat in Burgundy, died in service in the hospital of Lyons in 1636.[38] More than eighty Capuchins died of the pestilence in Burgundy in the great outbreak of 1636.[39] In 1630 seventeen Capuchins died in ministering to the souls and bodies of the stricken people in the Dauphiné ; they nursed Huguenots and Catholics with the same charity.[40]

Further south in Languedoc the pestilence appeared in 1627 and quickly spread from town to town. For five years it raged, wearing down the spirit of the people by reiterated outbreaks. No more poignant story of simple heroism can be found than the plain narrative of events told by the Capuchin chronicler of Languedoc. "I now undertake," he writes, "the recital of the most lamentable events save the desolation wrought by the civil wars, that befell this province of Capuchins since its foundation ; those of the general pestilence which ravaged a great part of this kingdom and hurled itself upon the towns within the boundaries of this province." He then tells how the pestilence broke out at Saint-Flour in Auvergne and from there was brought to Figeac by a

[37] Pellegrino da Forli, op. cit., I, p. 87, *seq.* Altogether Père Alfonse had spent fourteen years in the service of those stricken by pestilence.

[38] *ibid.*, p. 210.

[39] *Bullar. Ord. Cap.* V, p. 147 ; Pellegrino da Forli, op. cit., I, p. 213, *seq.*

[40] Fagniez, loc. cit., p. 297.

voiturier at the time that the Capuchins were preaching the Advent sermons in the town. The people prayed, but the pestilence took its course ; everyone fled who could ; and there were not sufficient priests to tend the sick. The town consuls came to the Capuchin friary and pleaded for aid in succouring the sick. " One morning the Guardian assembled his religious and explained the public calamity that had befallen the town, and the request the consuls had made. He then directed the priests to say mass and the other religious to communicate, with the intention of obtaining from God the light needful to show them how they should act in this crisis. After that he enquired of each one separately what he was disposed to do. All asked to be employed in the service of the sick, each alleging in his own favour some reason for preference." Eventually the Guardian chose two of the strongest—Père David de Gimont and Frère Georges de Mirande. These " bade farewell to the brethren and betook themselves to the huts of the plague-stricken at the commencement of the year 1628. Their presence in this place of sorrows was a great consolation to the unfortunates whom the plague had brought together. But Frère Georges was attacked by the contagious disease and died on 25 April. Three other martyrs of charity succeeded him and gained the same palm. They were PP. Martineau de Bordeaux, Bruno de Rodez, Cassin de Castelnaudary . . .

"After the death of Frère Georges the sickness developed in so intense a fashion that all the inhabitants and even the consuls thought well to leave their houses and go into the country to breathe a purer air. Hardly had the inhabitants left the town than the Huguenots, who were still in rebellion in these parts, came to ravage the country. The magistrates placed some soldiers to guard the town and gave the command to one of the principal townsmen. After five days the commandant was stricken ill with the plague and died. His successor perished likewise after about four days ; and now nobody was willing to accept the dangerous post. Then the magistrates and the people prayed Père David to re-enter the town and take the command. . . Père David excused himself, alleging his incapacity and the spirit of his holy profession ; but he was overcome by the prayers of the magistrates and the tears of the people. So he took command of

the town. Every evening he entered the town and gave his orders to the soldiers and made his rounds during the night. Every morning he left the town and returned to the plague-stricken and gave himself to the needs of the victims. He continued this rôle for five months with indefatigable zeal, occupying himself equally with things spiritual and temporal, administering the sacraments and distributing the *vivres*.

"Sauveterre, a large town in the diocese of Rodez, was the second place where the plague showed itself in the year 1628 . . . Here we have not a friary ; but as the people had always been most attached to us, they had recourse to us in their great need. . . As the police in this town were unequal to the various exigencies of the situation in establishing services for the sick and the dead, our religious were constrained to add to the administration of the sacraments all other needful duties. Often must they take up with their own hand and carry to the grave the bodies of those who had been dead five or six days, which they found at the entry of the houses or outside the doors. This contact settled their infection and their death, which happened at the end of June."

And so the narration continues, taking town by town. At Parmiers two of the first three volunteers died within a month and their places were taken by others in the plague-encampment ; the same happened at Castelnaudary and at Castelsarrasin. At Saint-Antonin many Huguenots were converted at seeing the charity of Père Antoine de Toulouse, whose companion died of the plague. At Béziers, Frère Didace fell at his post: knowing that he must die, he leaned against his bed, and sang the *Te Deum* "with a powerful voice not ordinarily found in the dying." Ten others died in the service of the sick in that year 1628 ; and yet more in the four years following. It is a noble record.[41] The French Capuchins in their marvellous activity as preachers of the Word had not forgotten the Gospel warning, that it is not they who teach but they who do and teach who are great in the kingdom of heaven.

[41] *Recueil chronologique . . . des Capucins d'Aquitaine* quoted at length in *Histoire des Capucins*, op. cit., I, pp. 378-418.

(v)

Meanwhile across the border of the French monarchy in the dominions of the Duke of Savoy, but in that part of the Duke's territories united with France in the bond of a common language, the Capuchins had done valiant duty in the swift campaign which had made the Chablais once again a Catholic land and had rescued the Vallais from the impending subjugation of that country to the Protestant supremacy of Geneva. At the time when this mission was undertaken, the Capuchins in Savoy were still under the jurisdiction of the Capuchin province of Lyons. Such was the success of the mission that fourteen years later Savoy was erected into a missionary province of the Order under its own superiors : for here as elsewhere the mission led to the establishment of friaries to consolidate the work of the mission.

It was, as has been said, a swift campaign, particularly in the Chablais ; which seems to prove that here as in many other parts, the people had submitted to Calvinism without true conviction. Their hearts had not gone over with their change of opinion, though for a time they clung with a militant obstinacy to the opinion they had embraced. Hardly otherwise can we explain the reconversion of the Chablais to the Church and the saving of the Vallais, an incident of first importance to the cause of Catholicism in France, establishing an outpost against the still menacing designs of Geneva ; and it was the first notable success in the extended missionary campaign to break the Calvinist hold on the entire Alpine borderland of Piedmont and Lombardy.

Since 1595, Capuchin missionaries had been at work side by side with the Jesuits in the Alpine valleys on the confines of Savoy and Piedmont, where the Waldenses, supported by the Calvinists, had suppressed the exercise of the Catholic Faith and seized the churches of the Catholics. Padre Valeriano da Pinerolo—himself a native of the district—had been the organiser of this mission. The pastors, as one would expect, were violently opposed to the invasion, and it would have gone hard with the missionaries had not the Duke of Savoy intervened to protect them and to forbid the coercive measures taken by the pastors to prevent the people from listening to the missionaries' preaching. Given an open

field the Capuchins made headway with their incessant preaching and their public conferences with the pastors. In the Val di San Germano, Padre Filippo da Pancaliero, in 1596, received the abjuration of over six hundred of the valley folk, and in three years his converts numbered thirteen hundred.[42]

About the same time that this mission was launched, the Duke of Savoy petitioned the Capuchins of the province of Lyons to send missionaries to assist in reclaiming to the Catholic Faith his duchy of Chablais.[43] That territory had been occupied by the government of Berne in the days of Duke Charles the Good, and during the occupation Catholicism had been stamped out with all the energy of Calvinist intolerance. Not that the Calvinists met with any firm resistance ; it was the common story of a weak faith giving way before the strong. And now, though the territories had been again returned to the successor of Duke Charles, the Calvinist faith still ruled, and the Catholics were but a handful.

Two years before the coming of the Capuchins, François de Sales—that second St. Francis whom everybody loves—had begun his apostolate in the Chablais, and for two years had laboured heroically without any sign of success. Had he listened to the advice of others he would have given up the thankless task ; but François de Sales was of heroic build : his heart was in the conversion of this people, and his only reply to the critics was to call for a more intensive apostolate,

[42] *Histoire Abrégée des Missions des Pères Capucins de Savoye par le Père Charles de Genève* 1657 *traduite en François par le Père Fidèle de Tallissien, Capucin*, 1680. (Chambéry, 1867.) Père Charles wrote his memoirs of the mission at the instance of the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation of the Propaganda Fide and the Papal nuncio at the court of Turin. He had been himself one of the missionaries whose labours he describes. The original Latin manuscript seems to have disappeared. Though written to preserve the memory of the part taken by the Capuchins in the conversion of the Chablais and the Vallais, the history has been well described as "*un monument de la plus éminente sainteté et à l'héroisme du dévouement de l'immortel François de Sales*" (Editor's Preface). It is to be regretted that the editor of Père Fidèle's translation has not subjected it to a critical examination. It is evident that Père Fidèle interpolated more recent events in the last chapter of Père Charles' work since he records events of the years 1658, 1660 and 1686

cf. Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., I, p. 202, *seq.* *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, V, pp. 133-135. Boverius, *Annales, anno* 1596, 4.

[43] cf. Rocco de Cesinale, op. cit., I, p. 247, *seq.* ; Boverius, *Annales, anno* 1596 ; *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, V, p. 137.

and the calling in of the Jesuits and Capuchins to assist in the work. To the Capuchins were at first assigned the vallaiges of Gaillard and Ternier ; whilst François continued his seemingly hopeless labour in Thonon. The task of reclaiming to the Church the vallaige of Gaillard, under the very walls of Geneva, was given to Père Chérubin de Maurienne. He was a man of remarkable pertinacity and daring ; a robust fighter and a hard hitter, yet withal a merry fighter with no strain of bitterness towards his worst enemy. Soon the pastors and politicians came to hate him, the people to give him the admiration his clean fighting deserved. Between him and Saint François was quickly formed a close friendship, such as men of different characters but a common intense loyalty are apt to form. Saint François admired Chérubin's selfless audacity ; Chérubin, Saint François' wisdom and sanctity. And Chérubin was eloquent with a forcible eloquence such as the people love. The magistrates of Geneva forbade the people to attend his sermons; Chérubin flooded the city with leaflets inviting the Genevese to come and listen: and the people came. Then the magistrates endeavoured forcibly to prevent them ; and the people asked why they were afraid ; and continued to come in spite of magistrates and pastors ; and conversions became common. Chérubin's weapon was his use of the Scriptures, in the knowledge of which he was a master. He challenged the pastors to public conferences. At first they came readily, later not so readily, and eventually the magistrates of Geneva forbade the conferences : meanwhile Chérubin's converts increased. In September 1597 he launched his first great offensive at Annemasse over against Geneva. With permission of the bishop, Claude de Granier, he held the devotion of the Forty Hours' adoration of the Blessed Sacrament which as we have seen was a main arm of attack in all Capuchin missionary enterprises.[44] The devotion was published far and wide, even by means of leaflets in Geneva itself. From all parts of Savoy Catholics came to be present; whilst Calvinists from the immediate district and from Geneva joined in the crowd. The Blessed Sacrament was exposed for adoration on the richly decorated altar of the oratory ; outside in the open air was the pulpit. The

[44] Charles de Genève, op. cit., p. 26.

Catholics from distant parts came in organised bodies, walking in procession, and as each body arrived they halted at the pulpit, and a sermon was preached ; then followed the service of adoration. It is said that thirty thousand people took part in the devotion ; and in his report to the Duke of Savoy, Chérubin stated that five thousand Calvinists made their abjuration. The pastors of Annemasse fled to Geneva, leaving the churches in the hands of the Catholics. Thereupon Geneva appealed to Berne, and the Bernese threatened Savoy with war. Savoy at the moment was watching France and could not afford a war with Berne. Chérubin, therefore, was transferred to Thonon, but his work in the Gaillard was continued by his associates. At Thonon he found but a dozen Catholics, the first-fruits of the heroic apostolate of Saint François ; but the Saint had sown the seed which the robust Capuchin was to reap. Undaunted by the issue at Annemasse, Chérubin at once adopted the open offensive in Thonon. Hitherto mass had been said but privately ; Chérubin said mass publicly in the church of Saint-Hippolyte of which the Catholics had part use. He preached, too, in the public squares and on market days in the market place. A minister was brought from Lausanne to debate with him in public conference. Chérubin met him smilingly—Chérubin's smile was one of his assets—and in the opinion of the audience he held his own. So matters went on for some months, during which Chérubin claimed and obtained the exclusive use of Saint-Hippolyte. Then in September was held the Forty Hours' adoration. From Savoy, Burgundy and Switzerland came crowds of pilgrims to take part in the devotion ; they numbered in all about twenty thousand persons. It was a great festival. On the first day the bishop, Claude de Granier, " reconciled " the ancient church of Saint-Augustin which sixty years before had been taken by the Calvinists, who had broken down the altars. Now the Calvinists voluntarily brought back the consecrated stones, and the altars were restored ; and mass was sung solemnly for the first time since the Calvinists had taken Thonon. From various parishes came processions of Calvinists to make their abjuration in the hands of the bishop ; from Bellevaux came three hundred ; from St. Cergne came another three hundred, bringing with them a cross that for

many years had been kept by the villagers secretly ; two hundred came from Fessy and sixty from Pergny and a few from the city of Geneva and even from Berne. The processions and sermons continued day and night. On the second day, François de Sales preached : it was the harvest at last for which he had laboured with unquenched zeal and hope during two desolate years.

The following year, 1598, the devotion was again held with enhanced solemnity ; and this year the Duke of Savoy and the Papal nuncio, the Cardinal de Medici, took part. Calvinism in Thonon finally capitulated ; Veret, the last of the ministers left for Geneva ; and Thonon was once again a Catholic town ; practically the whole population had returned to the Catholic Faith.[45]

Chérubin's work was now to secure the ground gained and to extend the Catholic conquest. At his suggestion provision was made by the Pope and the Duke of Savoy for the maintenance of the parish priests who were now installed in the restored churches ; but his chief work was the establishment at Thonon of the Sainte-Maison, under the patronage of our Lady of Compassion, as a centre of missionary activities.

The project of the Sainte-Maison had been in Père Chérubin's thoughts for some time before he went to Rome in 1599. It seems to have started with the idea of a house where poor converts, suddenly deprived of means of sustenance by their abjuration of Calvinism, might be temporarily sheltered ; and where the missionary priests might have a lodging or a rest between their missionary journeys. By the time he went to Rome the scheme had enlarged itself in his mind ; it was to include a training institute for priests destined to undertake the work of the missionary, and a school for the teaching of letters.

Clement VIII entered whole-heartedly into the scheme, and by a bull dated September 15, 1599, authorised its foundation and the appropriation of certain benefices towards its maintenance. François de Sales was nominated as its first prefect, and the organisation committed to Père Chérubin.[46] The Duke of Savoy gave generously to the

[45] cf. Boverius, *Annales*, *anno* 1601, 1.
[46] Charles de Genève, op. cit., p. 80, *seq.*, and p. 108, *seq.*

foundation,[47] and to assist the work a confraternity of our Lady of Compassion was instituted with the Pope's approval. To inaugurate the scheme, Clement VIII at the petition of the Duchess Marguerite of Savoy, granted the extraordinary favour—as it was in those days—of a Jubilee, to take place at Thonon and to last two months. The Jubilee was fixed to begin at Pentecost 1602. It was published not only in Savoy but in Switzerland and the adjoining provinces of France, Germany and Milan. The magistrates of Berne took alarm and closed their frontier to any transport of food into the Chablais ; the governor of Savoy took counter-measures to ensure a food supply. During the two months of Jubilee one hundred and sixty-two thousand pilgrims came to Thonon to make their confession and gain the indulgence. One hundred confessors had been brought to Thonon to hear confessions. Each day four sermons were preached. The Jubilee completed the conversion of the whole of the Chablais. That same year, on September 17, the festival of the stigmata of St. Francis, Bishop de Granier died ; and François de Sales succeeded him as Bishop of Geneva.[48]

Père Chérubin was now commissioned by the Pope to undertake a missionary campaign to save the Catholic Faith in the Vallais.[49] Unless succour be sent at once, the Pope told him, the Vallais will be totally lost to the Catholic Faith. The Vallaisons, as a chronicler remarks, were neither Catholics nor Calvinists so far as the people generally were concerned ; the nobles were Huguenots. The Catholic clergy still held the churches, but they did not trouble the consciences of their reputed flock, being themselves for the most part as indifferent to religion as were the people.

Père Chérubin still busy with the foundation of Sainte-Maison at Thonon, despatched Sebastien de Maurienne and Augustin d'Asti. They took up their residence at St. Gingez, which lies on the Savoy side of the river which divides the Vallais from Savoy, since the temper of the Vallaisons was uncertain ; the magistrates of Berne having sent warning to beware of the Capuchins. For some time the two mis-

47 See also his letter in favour of the Capuchins of June 20, 1601. *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, V, p. 127.

48 Since Geneva had come under Calvinist rule the Bishop of Geneva had his residence at Annecy.

49 cf. Boverius, *Annales*, *anno* 1601, 4, *seq.*

sionaries crossed the river each morning and laboured in the immediate country around Montey ; each evening they went back to St. Gingez. At length the inhabitants of Montey gave them a hospice in the town. One Sunday they went to Saint-Maurice, and preached four sermons to the people. When they were about to return to Montey in the evening, the townsfolk begged them to remain the night and preach again on the morrow ; and so it happened every day for three weeks. At the end of that time the parish priest, who had been absent, returned and his alarm was great when he learned what had taken place ; he feared the wrath of the Huguenot seigneurs. Yet being a good man he entertained the two friars at his table and begged them to lodge in his house. So there they remained, preaching daily and holding conferences with the Calvinist ministers. On Christmas Day three Calvinist families made their abjuration. As to the Catholics hitherto indifferent, they seemed eager to accept the ministration of their Faith now offered them. At Martigny the friars met with less welcome on the part of the people ; there Calvinism was a more positive force. At first the preachers met with insults and mockery and even blows ; till, won by their patience and the simplicity of their life, the townsfolk relented and came to the friars to apologise for their ill-treatment. After that they listened willingly. The Capuchins now preached every day in the church or the market place. This aroused violent opposition on the part of the ministers, who sought to prevent their preaching on market days, urging that the preaching interfered with business, and would ruin the markets. Finally the magistrates of Berne intervened and threatened the Bishop of Sion with reprisals if the Capuchins were allowed to remain in the country. The bishop, whose philosophy was to avoid trouble if he could, ordered the governor of the Vallais to expel the Capuchins within three days ; the governor refused, saying he would resign the governorship rather than hand over the Catholics to the wolves. Thereupon the bishop took courage ; he invited the Capuchins to send preachers to the episcopal city itself, and issued letters patent recognising the mission and the Papal faculties accorded to missionaries.[50] Meanwhile some of the missionaries had penetrated

[50] cf. *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, V, p. 128.

into the higher valleys, but there they were met by the language difficulty ; the people in the higher valleys spoke German. A messenger was therefore sent to the Capuchins in Switzerland begging them to undertake the mission in these parts ; and so it was arranged.

But now a further trouble arose. The bailiff of Sion, Jossin, a Calvinist, learning that the Capuchins had been invited to preach in the city, entered into communication with Berne and Geneva ; with the result that a new demand was made to the bishop to expel the Capuchins from the Vallais. Such was the news that greeted Père Augustin on his arrival at the episcopal palace. The canons of the cathedral were in a panic of fear ; the bishop was too indisposed to receive the preacher whom he had invited. None knew what the issue might be ; it was feared that the Calvinists in the valleys, aided by Berne, would rise and drive out the bishop and seize the churches as they had done elsewhere. In this predicament, Père Augustin bethought him of Père Chérubin as the one man who might save the situation ; and set off for Thonon to bring him to Sion.

Père Chérubin arrived at Sion in time for the Eve of the Ascension. It was the great festival of the year and from all the outlying parishes the people came to the city to take part in the religious services. The redoubtable dean of the cathedral invited Chérubin to preach at the festival, but the Calvinists declared that should he attempt to mount the pulpit, they would kill him. Some of the Catholics fearing for his life, now begged him to desist and leave the city. Chérubin smilingly replied that he was in God's hands, and went to the pulpit guarded by Riedmatten, the dean. Chérubin, as we have said, was an eloquent preacher ; but it seems his sermon that day was a marvel of tact as well as of eloquence. Some Calvinists attempted to make a demonstration ; the people—*le petit peuple*—forced them to desist. Chérubin by his address won their hearts.

After that he remained some time in the Vallais, preaching in the towns and countryside ; and during that time he induced the Duke of Savoy to remit a portion of the debt due to him from the Vallais.

In 1604 the diet met, and notwithstanding the violent opposition of the Calvinists, declared by a majority of votes

that the Catholic religion was the religion of the Vallais, and ordered that the Capuchins should be everywhere received without molestation. At that the Calvinist minority rose up in armed rebellion ; they numbered in their ranks the greater part of the landed "seigneurs." Aid was sent to the Catholics from Savoy and the Catholic cantons of Switzerland ; and the Catholics were thus enabled to hold their own. The Calvinists then appealed to France, declaring that the Capuchins were working in the interests of Savoy and Spain. In the political situation of the time it was a subtle move. The king of France directed his ambassador at the Roman Court to ask for the recall of the Capuchins ; but on enquiry the Pope exonerated the friars from any political intrigue, and they were left to carry on the mission.

Meanwhile Père Chérubin had returned to Thonon to direct the organisation of the Sainte-Maison, and the extension of missions in the Chablais and its adjoining territories; and to that work he gave the remainder of his days. In 1611 he was in Rome on business concerning the missions. The Capuchins of Savoy were now formed into a separate missionary province ; and further Papal provision was made for the work of the Sainte-Maison. But Chérubin had come to the end of his labours ; on his return journey he fell sick at Turin, and died on 20 July. One thinks of him as a man of splendid energy and a disarming smile.[51]

He died, but his works remained. Under the Italian, Diego da Cittanova, who became head of the mission in 1613, the work developed. Diego had been a lawyer and judge in his native Marches of Ancona before he became a Capuchin. He was a man of wide vision, and of an energy hardly less incisive than that of Père Chérubin. Under Diego's direction the Sainte-Maison began to send out "flying squadrons"—*missions volantes*—to minister to the needs of the Catholics in territories far and near ; they were eventually to be found in the lands of Berne and the Vaud, in the district of Gex, in the Alpine Valle d'Aosta and even in the Calvinist districts of Burgundy.[52]

[51] See besides Charles de Genève, op. cit.; *La Vie du P. Chérubin de Maurienne;* (Paris, 1911) ; Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., I, pp. 247-317.

[52] cf. Charles de Genève, op. cit., p 181, *seq.* ; Rocco da Cesinale, II, p. 296 *seq.*

The work of these " flying squadrons " was often done on the road. They made friends with the wayfarers they met ; they mingled with the labourers in the fields ; under the open sky they instructed and preached. The Calvinist peasantry in time looked for their coming and came to meet them on the way, bringing their sick and their children to be blessed. And not only the peasantry. Even in Berne and Lausanne, well-to-do Calvinists at times offered their hospitality, and kept them for days to discuss religious doctrines. " Had they been Catholics," says the chronicler of the Mission, referring to the Calvinists of Berne and Lausanne, " they could not have received us more affectionately ; so many good gestures could not but be presages of the desire they had to be converted who showed such goodwill to the missionaries."[53] But not everywhere was the harvest so plentiful as in the Chablais where François de Sales had watered the soil with his tears and prayers.

53 Charles de Genève, p. 182.

CHAPTER X

THE CAPUCHINS ENTER GERMANY

(i)

THE Capuchins first entered Germany in 1593, in which year they were invited by the Archduke Ferdinand to make a settlement at Innsbruck.[1] Here they were in the midst of a Catholic population, but not far off on all sides they were encircled by militant Protestantism. On the one side lay Switzerland, where friars were already carrying on an energetic missionary campaign, and also the Grisons, that hotbed of Calvinism where twenty years previously they had made an heroic effort to succour the oppressed Catholics and where twenty years later they were to make a second and more successful invasion; to the north lay Bavaria and Swabia where the struggle between Catholicism and Protestantism was still bitter; whilst to the east in the further dominions of the Hapsburgs, it could hardly yet be said that Catholicism was in the ascendancy, notwithstanding the Catholic character of the Hapsburg rulers. Of the friars who settled in Innsbruck it has been said, such was the example of their holy life that the piety of the people was enkindled; and as time went on they were invited to establish other friaries not only in the Tyrol, but beyond in Bavaria and Franconia.[2] In 1596 they were established in Salzburg; in 1600, in Munich; sixteen years later the first friary was founded in Franconia at the invitation of the Prince-Bishop of Wirzburg.[3]

At Salzburg their friend was the Prince-archbishop Wolfgang Theodoric, he who sought to make his city another

[1] *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, p. 123, *seq.*; *Anal. Ord. Cap.* V, p. 108.
[2] *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, p. 123.
[3] Concerning the Capuchin Province of Franconia, see *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, p. 165, *seq.*; *Origo et erectio antiquæ Provinciæ Franconicæ* in *Anal. Ord. Cap.*, XIX, p. 183, *seq.*

Rome not only in faith but in the splendour of buildings ; and at first it was a sore point with him that the Capuchins would accept no building but such as manifested their devotion to poverty.[4] Maximilian I, who welcomed the friars to Bavaria, understood them better. Their poverty and simplicity appealed to his own deeply devout spirit ; he himself was no stranger to the penitential garb.[5]

In 1597 came a call from Bohemia. Early in that year Zbyneck, Archbishop of Prague, with the consent of the Papal nuncio Aldobrandini, wrote to the General of the Capuchins, to send workers to his diocese " to bring back to the Catholic Faith those who had wandered from it."[6] He wrote a few months later to Cardinals Camerini and Paravicini, inviting their mediation with the Pope and the Capuchin General that Capuchins should be sent to Prague :[7] with the result that two years later thirteen friars were despatched under the leadership of Lorenzo da Brindisi, a Definitor General of the Order.[8]

That was the beginning of a new chapter in the history of the Capuchins and their adventures in the work of the Counter-Reformation. Before this new chapter came to a conclusion, the Capuchin Order was to be spread over every state of Southern Germany from the Tyrol to the confines of Poland and Croatia ; and even in Poland the friars would be known by individual missionary workers. Six Capuchin provinces were thus to be founded in Southern Germany besides two on the Rhine, which were of separate origin.[9]

The course of these early adventures in Bavaria and the dominions of the Hapsburgs is in the main dominated by three strong personalities, Lorenzo da Brindisi, Giacinto da Casale and that encyclopædic genius known to posterity as Valeriano Magno—all three Italians, though the last was in

4 *Chronica Bavaricæ Capucinorum Provinciæ* (Augustæ Vindelicorum, 1869), p. 10.

5 *ibid.*, p. 10.

6 *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, p. 171.

7 *ibid.*, pp. 173-174.

8 On July 7, 1598, Cardinal San Georgio had written to the Archbishop of Prague, announcing that the Pope had given an order that twelve Capuchins should be sent to Prague, and asking the Archbishop to arrange accommodation for them on their journey from Innsbruck, *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, p. 177.

9 The six provinces were Tyrol, Bavaria, Franconia, Bohemia, Austria-Hungary and Styria. Those on the Rhine, founded from Flanders, were Cologne and the Rhine province.

part of Polish origin. They were ably supported by friars of German birth; such as Ludwig von Einsiedln, a converted Lutheran and notable preacher;[10] Samuel von Grieffenfels, a saintly religious and able administrator:[11] and later, Procopius of Brandenburg, who worked manfully for the reformation of the clergy as well as for the revival of faith amongst the Catholic laity.[12]

Yet it is the three Italians who hold the stage and give a distinctive interest to the history of the Capuchins in Upper Germany and the Hapsburg dominions during the first half of the seventeenth century.

Lorenzo da Brindisi[13] was of Venetian origin, of the family of Rossi, not unknown in Venetian politics. His father had taken service with Ferdinand I of Naples, and so it happened that Lorenzo was born at Brindisi; but at his father's death he was sent to Venice to complete his schooling. As a boy he was of an unusually serious cast of mind, fonder of religious exercises than of games: he was studious, given to much reading; but his mind was of the acquisitive sort rather than the speculative; and he had a natural facility for languages. In later years he himself declared that if the Bible were lost he would be able to dictate both the Old and the New Testaments in their original Hebrew and Greek texts![14] He could preach in French, German, Spanish and Hebrew besides his native Italian. At twenty-three whilst

[10] *Chron. Bavar. Cap. Prov.*, op. cit., p. 11, *seq.*

[11] *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, p. 176.

[12] Procopius was not only renowned as a preacher; he was also a voluminous writer. He is said to have published two thousand six hundred and seventeen books and pamphlets! cf. *Bibl. Script. Ord. Cap.*, op. cit., p. 217.

[13] Summarium Proc. Bonaventura da Coccalio: *Ristretto istorico della vita . . . del B. Lorenzo da Brindisi* (Rome 1783), published on the occasion of the saint's beatification; Anthony Brennan: *Life of St. Lawrence of Brindisi* (London, 1911), based mainly upon the foregoing *Ristretto istorico* and the letters of the nuncio Spinelli in the Vatican Archives (unfortunately it is insufficiently documented); but for the labours of San Lorenzo in Germany, see his own narrative written at the command of the Minister General and edited by Père Edouard d'Alençon, with copious extracts from the hitherto unedited letters of Spinelli and others in the Vatican Archives and the Bibliotheca Angelica: *De S. Laurentio a Brundusio documenta inedita* in *Anal. Ord. Cap.*, XXV, p. 79, *seq.* and XXVI, p. 53, *seq.*; see also the documents edited for the first time concerning Lorenzo's embassy to Spain in 1618-1619, *ibid.*, XXXVI, p. 138, *seq.*

[14] He attributed his knowledge of Hebrew to the special aid of the Blessed Virgin before whose statue he was accustomed to study the Scriptures on his knees in an attitude of prayer.

yet in deacon's Orders he acquired repute as a preacher in various cities of Italy. Provincial Minister in Tuscany when but thirty-one years of age, he was elected Definitor General at thirty-seven. Meanwhile he had been drawn to undertake a special apostolate for the conversion of the Jews. He preached to them in their own tongue, and prepared himself for the work by mastering the more famous Rabbinical writings. Such was his reputation that Gregory XIII and Clement VIII both invited him to Rome to preach to the Jews there. He made many converts, yet continued in friendly relations with the rabbis and the Jewish population generally wherever he came; only once in Venice did a section of the Jews show any hostility to his preaching. The reason given for this general friendliness was his perfect courtesy.

The picture we have of him shows a man of commanding presence, grave and imperturbable; he had a piercing glance and a decisive turn of speech softened by a quiet smile which often played around his lips; a man of few words except when occasion demanded or when he was deeply stirred, and then his words would flow forth in unpremeditated eloquence but always to the point. In his humility he preferred to obey and serve; but when duty obliged him to rule and direct, he ruled with the decision and natural assumption of authority which belongs to the born ruler; nor would any human respect tempt him to shelve his own responsibility. Quietly but firmly he once reminded the Papal nuncio, Spinelli, that he was the superior of the friars, and reversed the nuncio's appointment of chaplains to the imperial army in Hungary;[15] and in France when making his visitation as General of the Order, he intervened with seemingly a high hand in the elections of a provincial chapter.[16] Men stood in awe of him; yet admired and reverenced him. He lacked perhaps the qualities which excite an affectionate comradeship; but he never lacked a devoted—if a somewhat awed—attachment from those with whom he worked. For many years before his death he was spoken of as "the saint"; in his journeys through Italy people would run to catch a

[15] *Documenta inedita, Anal. Ord. Cap.*, XXV, p. 138.
[16] *Histoire des Capucins*, op. cit., I, p. 277.

glimpse of him and to ask his blessing when the cry "il santo" announced his approach.[17]

But he himself thought of nothing but of the service he must render to the Lord he served; he lived but to do his duty. When at length he lay dying at Lisbon, it was with the serenity of one who knew no will but the will of his Lord.

Such was Lorenzo da Brindisi who in the summer of 1599 assembled his small band of twelve friars at Venice, and having consecrated them to the service to which they were called, set forth with them to traverse on foot the long road, which lay through the Tyrol. They reached Vienna in August. Leaving part of his band there, Lorenzo pressed on to Prague, where he was received by the Archbishop and lodged in a hospital, till a friary could be built for the friars on ground adjoining the imperial gardens. At the time of their arrival sickness of a pestilential sort was raging in the city, and the friars gave themselves to attending the sick in the hospital: but on Sundays and feast days Lorenzo preached in the hospital church, and notwithstanding the sickness the church was filled with citizens curious to hear the preacher.

The reception of the friars by the city itself was of a mixed character, and for the most part disconcerting. Prague was not yet a Catholic city; its population was typical of the population of the Hapsburg dominions at the time. On the whole the popular sentiment was Protestant rather than Catholic; or of that confused sort which inclined towards Protestantism in doctrine and religious services even when not definitely committed to a breach with Rome. The symbol of this confused sentiment was the communion under both species which Ferdinand I had wrung from the Holy See on the supposition that such a concession would save the Hapsburg dominions from following the complete apostasy of the Protestant North. The result was that with large numbers of the people it was difficult to say whether they were Protestants or Catholics; whilst the greater number of the land-owners and well-to-do citizens were confessedly in opposition to the Church. To all these the coming of the Capuchins was a challenge. At first the well-

17. cf *infra*, chapter xii.

to-do portion of the populace met the challenge by throwing ridicule on these men whose dress symbolised a poverty and uncouthness which offended the social respectability and commercial success of the new gospel. The Capuchins could not appear in the streets but they would be greeted with cries of derision, of which the least offensive was "Bare-feet!"

But soon derision gave place to violent hostility as Lorenzo's sermons began to be discussed and talked about. Once as he was crossing the old bridge of Prague, a crowd set on him and would have thrown him into the river but for the timely intervention of the nuncio's nephew who happened to come on the scene in company with some youthful friends.

Meanwhile in Vienna the Capuchins were experiencing an even more violent opposition from the Protestants; the house in which they lodged was attacked by a mob and the superior narrowly escaped being shot.

Then in the summer of 1600 Rudolf II returned to Prague; the nervous disease from which he was suffering had become more acute; melancholia and delusions had supervened. He had welcomed the coming of the Capuchins and contributed towards the building of the friary; now he took a sudden dislike to them and was persuaded they had designs on his life. The diet which met at Prague later in the year decreed the expulsion of the friars from the kingdom; Rudolf at the intervention of the Papal nuncio and the archbishop refused to sign the decree, but a little later under the delusion that their presence in the city was the cause of his illness, he ordered them to leave; then as suddenly he revoked the order, crying out that they were protected by a Power greater than he. During these mad crises, Lorenzo acted with supreme tact. He was dealing with a case of insanity and shaped his course accordingly. His acquiescence in the invalid's moods at last turned suspicion into confidence; and Rudolf now left the friars in peace.

In the meantime, Lorenzo had paid a visit to Vienna and had founded a friary there, and at the request of the Archduke Ferdinand had sent friars to make a settlement in Gratz. This had meant the bringing of another contingent of Capuchins from Italy; and amongst the new-comers was

Benedetto of the Passionei of Urbino, a persuasive preacher, whose power lay in his manifest holiness.[18]

In Germany, as in France, the friaries became centres of an intense missionary activity both for the revival of the faith of the indifferent Catholics and for the combating of militant Protestantism; and not only did the preachers occupy the pulpits in the cities, they spread abroad into the country districts to instruct the peasantry,[19] and, as in France, adopted the system of Apostolic Missions for regaining certain districts to Catholicism.[20] And in Germany as elsewhere the Capuchins worked to revive the faith by means of devotion to the Eucharistic Presence. They established confraternities of the Blessed Sacrament, preached the devotion of the Forty Hours' adoration, and fostered the practice of frequent communion. In Munich their first act was to establish such a confraternity and a monthly day of adoration in the friary church;[21] moreover they instituted penitential confraternities to combat the general licentiousness in the cities. Such was the confraternity of the Passion, established in Prague at the time Fra Mattia da Salò was preaching there. The members dressed with austere simplicity, practised bodily mortification, heard mass daily and were active in works of charity. On Good Friday they went in procession through the streets of the city; some of them clothed in the white garb of a penitent, flogged themselves with the discipline as they went along; others, dressed in black robes, carried emblems of the Passion. These processions, it is said, deeply stirred the faith of the Catholics and were witnessed with respect by the Protestants.[22] In such wise did the main body of the Capuchins work for the recovery of the Catholic Faith throughout Southern Germany.

[18] Benedetto was beatified in 1867; cf. *Bullard. Ord. Cap.*, X, p. 527 Concerning his connection with the Mission in Germany, see *Anal. Ord. Cap.*, XXVI, p. 156, *seq.*

[19] *Chron. Bavar*: *Cap. Prov.*, p. 26.

[20] The Missions in the diocese of Salzburg were undertaken at the request of Archbishop Sittich in 1613. See the Archbishop's letters in *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, pp. 124-125. They were reconstituted in the eighteenth century. *ibid.*, pp. 143-151. In the constitution of Archbishop Leopold the office of the missionaries is "to go from place to place and from house to house, catechising and instructing the peasantry, etc."

[21] *Chron. Bavar. Cap. Prov.*, p. 11.

[22] Bullar, *Ord. Cap.*, IV, p. 277, *seq.*, where the brief of Paul V is given confirming the statutes of the confraternity.

Their story is one of unostentatious patient endeavour, of daily difficulties unflinchingly faced amidst the turmoil and bitter animosities of the warring religious bodies and later of the devastating wars to which the religious turmoil was to lead. The witness of their silent heroism lies in the continuously growing settlements they effected throughout the warring land and in the affection of the people who stood by them in all that period of dire trouble. No better witness could they desire.

But our story must necessarily be of the men who heartened and led them, and who played the more manifest part in history. So we return to Lorenzo da Brindisi.

It was in the second year of his mission, 1601, that the opportunity came which was to impress his personality on the imagination of the country and some years later to bring him into the high politics of the empire. That opportunity was the renewed offensive of the Turks in Hungary. Canescha had fallen before their assault, and for the moment the Estates of the Hapsburg dominions had hushed their religious controversies and declared their support of the war to repel the invading foe. The Pope had sent an army to assist the Emperor ; it was a war between the Crescent and the Cross. With the Papal army twelve Capuchins had been sent as chaplains ; and the Pope ordered Lorenzo da Brindisi to supply four chaplains to the imperial forces. At the request of the Archduke Matthias, Lorenzo himself went with the army. Early in October the imperial forces came into touch with the Turks at Stuhlweissenburg—the Alba Regale of the old Hungarian monarchy. Lorenzo had been active amongst the Catholic troops, preaching and administering the sacraments in preparation for the approaching battle. To the Lutheran contingents his presence was a source of merriment and mockery : " Wolf-monk ! Wolf-monk !" they sang out whenever they gained sight of him. The fighting was at first inconclusive ; the Turks held their strong position in the hills, and the imperial forces had suffered much loss. Doubtful of success, the imperial commanders contemplated a retreat. It was then Lorenzo intervened. He scouted the idea of a retreat, and urged a massed attack. When the command still wavered he urged the more insistently, pledging his word that he himself would

lead the army to victory in the name of the Cross. His personality bore down opposition. For four days the fighting continued: Lorenzo rode at the head of the troops, holding his crucifix aloft and with his words heartening the men. Wherever the battle was hottest, there rode Lorenzo. Then occurred one of those strange happenings not unknown in battles. Wherever Lorenzo appeared the balls from the Turkish artillery fell harmless; to the troops—Lutherans and Catholics alike—he seemed protected by some invisible force, and there came to them the conviction that with him at their head victory was certain, and they followed him unwaveringly into the thickest of the fight. By the evening of 14 October the Turkish force was broken and in flight. The victory of Stuhlweissenburg had again saved the empire; and it was to Lorenzo that both the leaders and the men attributed the victory.[23] After the battle a number of the Lutherans were reconciled to the Church; and later, not a few of those who had followed Lorenzo in the fighting, followed him to the cloister and became Capuchins.

The following year Lorenzo was elected General of the Order and had to leave Germany, to the regret of the Emperor and the nuncio. But his heart was with the German mission, and to supply his place in Prague he sent thither the veteran preacher, Mattia da Salò, who a quarter of a century before had done such good work in France. Mattia was now over seventy years of age, but the fire of youth was still in him. As a preacher and writer his fame had travelled beyond the confines of Italy; and at Prague, during the three years he was there, he did gallant work in reviving the Faith and combating the teaching of the Lutherans.

Lorenzo himself returned to Prague in 1606. After the General Chapter of 1605, when he laid down the office of General, he had retired to Venice wishful for the solitude of a friar's cell; but solitude was not for him. Bishops called for him to preach in their dioceses; the Emperor commissioned him to settle a quarrel between the Duke of Mantua and one of his vassals; and in 1606 the Pope, at the Emperor's request ordered Lorenzo to return to Prague as Commissary

[23] *Summarium Process*, 85 *seq.*; see the letter of Urban VIII to the Emperor-elect, Ferdinand II, December 28, 1624, in *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, II, p. 292.

General of the Capuchin Missions in Southern Germany. And now he was to display on a larger scale the commanding qualities he had shown in the military operations at Stuhlweissenburg.

All students of German history know of the affair of Donauwörth, and how from a contention between the town and the Benedictine abbey, was struck the spark which set Germany at war with itself for nigh fifty years. The free town of Donauwörth, unimportant otherwise in history, was typical of the Protestant ascendancy in this, that whilst claiming the benefit of the peace of Augsburg in all that benefitted the Lutherans, it had persistently curtailed the liberty of worship which the treaty had given the Catholics. For instance, the Benedictine monks by right of the treaty should have been free to carry out the liturgical processions of the Rogation Days as had been the custom for centuries ; but the Lutherans of Donauwörth had insisted that the processions be shorn of their proper solemnity and that the monks should confine their procession to a back lane in the vicinity of the abbey, and even so should not unfurl their banners. The monks had submitted for a time, but in 1606, when the Rogation Days came, the abbot was no longer willing to slink along a back lane with furled banners, and boldly asserted his right to march forth with becoming dignity. At that the Lutherans had assailed the monks, and broken up the procession.

Lorenzo da Brindisi, on his way to Prague some months later, came to the abbey and heard the story from the abbot. He himself was not a man to sit down tamely when justice or the liberties of the Church were at stake, as the Duke of Mantua had already learned. On his arrival at Prague, he took up the case of the abbey, both with the Papal nuncio and the Court. The Court was inclined to leave the matter alone ; to Lorenzo this attitude was an illustration of the vacillating weakness which had done infinite harm to the Catholic cause.[24] He continued to urge that justice should be

[24] For the part played by Lorenzo see his own narrative, *Anal. Ord. Cap.* XXV, pp. 201-211. He adds simply : "*fu cosa notoria a tutti che se non fusse stato a Praga fra Lorenzo da Brindisi, il quale non senza grand rossore de ministri di Cesare ne fece pin volta passata in pulpito riprendendo il poco zelo della Religione Catholica, non sarebbe fato niente, temendo di non irritare con quest' attione gl'heretici e cagionare guerra nell' Imperio.*"

done to the abbey, and as private expostulations bore no fruit he publicly denounced from the pulpit the slackness of the Imperial Court in defending Catholic liberties. Eventually, as we all know, the Aulic Council delegated Maximilian of Bavaria to deal with the matter, and Donauwörth was forcibly compelled to forgo its usurped rights and to admit the liberty of Catholic worship ; even to receive the Jesuits. Duke Maximilian had rightly regarded the affair of Donauwörth as a test case and had dealt with it accordingly.

The Protestant states now took up the challenge ; none of them but was in the same legal or illegal position as small Donauwörth in regard to the peace of Augsburg ; and they were in no mind to recede from it. There came the diet of Ratisbon some months later. The Catholics were willing to confirm the peace of Augsburg with a clause that "whatever had been done in contravention of the same should be abolished, and things restored as before." But that was just what the Protestants were determined not to agree to ; and the diet broke up without any decision being arrived at. How the Protestant princes then entered into the League of the Union and swore to maintain themselves if need be by force of arms, need not be described here ; nor how they were abetted by the insurrection in Hungary and Austria and the bloodless revolution in Moravia which gave the government of these states to the Archduke Matthias. For the moment the fate of Catholicism lay in the balance. Matthias was indebted for his crown to the Protestants and paid for it by a policy of concession. The Emperor Rudolf had become little more than a figure-head, and Matthias, the future emperor, was suspected of a leaning towards Protestantism. The political disunion of the Hapsburg princes threatened to create a Protestant ascendancy in the empire just when Catholicism had begun to recover the ground it had lost in the earlier days of the Protestant revolt. But at that moment, Maximilian of Bavaria came forth as the leader of the Catholics : together with seven Ecclesiastical princes he formed the Catholic League sworn to defend the Catholic cause. But the League as thus constituted could not hope to stand against the Protestant Union ; it looked for allies in the Ecclesiastical Electors, in the zealous Arch-

duke Ferdinand, and above all in the King of Spain. Without their support the League could prove no effective force against the Union and the vacillating weakness of the House of Austria.

Such was the situation when, in 1609, the death of the Duke of Julich and Cleves without an heir threw the question of the succession into the already seething cauldron; and Protestants and Catholics became alert to secure the accession of the duchy to their respective territories. Both parties felt that a trial of strength could not long be delayed.

To secure the assistance of Spain was the pressing need of the Catholic League, and Lorenzo da Brindisi was chosen by the Duke of Bavaria, with the concurrence of the Spanish ambassador to the Emperor, to go to the Spanish Court as the League's envoy. Lorenzo's task was difficult enough. The King of Spain expressed his willingness to give support to the League, but manifestly resented the leadership of Bavaria as a reflection on the house of Austria. Negotiations dragged on : Lorenzo appealed to the king's reputation as a Catholic prince and to his own political interest in supporting the League; pointing out that the triumph of the Protestant princes in Germany would react on affairs in the Netherlands. Under the spell of Lorenzo's personality the king at length promised to send supplies to the Spanish ambassador in Prague, and to raise two regiments of infantry and one of cavalry : with that promise Lorenzo left Spain. The nuncio at Prague and the cardinals at the Papal court were dissatisfied with the meagreness of the promised support ; still more so when it became known that the promised supplies were conditional on the princes of the Austrian house joining the League. But Lorenzo, in an interview with the Pope, reassured His Holiness ; and then by the Pope's order went to Munich to assist as adviser to the Duke of Bavaria and as chaplain-general to the League's forces.[25]

As Lorenzo had shrewdly surmised, the mere promise of support from Spain would make the German Protestant princes and their Dutch ally pause before committing themselves to war. Meanwhile he worked to gain adherents to the League amongst the Catholic princes; no easy task

[25] *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, II, p. 289. For the documents relating to Lorenzo's mission to Spain, see *Anal. Ord. Cap.* XXV, p. 248, *seq.*

because of the divisions inspired by private interests which existed amongst the Catholic princes. Eventually the Archduke Ferdinand joined as co-director of the League with the Duke of Bavaria.

Lorenzo remained for three years in Munich as adviser to the duke in the formation of the League ; but his work was not wholly connected with politics. Always he was first the missionary-preacher. When affairs permitted he went on missionary tours in the neighbouring territories, sometimes to the danger of his life. He is said to have brought many Lutherans back to the Church. With Catholics in high position, whose lives were a scandal, he dealt with unflinching sternness. It was noticed that never did his serenity desert him, whether in diplomatic difficulties or in his dangerous adventures in Protestant districts during his missionary tours. Once when Rudolf II attempted to browbeat him in some negotiation concerning the proposed marriage of King Matthias and the Princess Elizabeth of Bavaria, Lorenzo calmly remarked : "A flea can do as much mischief as an elephant : I shall pursue the course that I believe to be in the interest of the Catholic Faith." His unruffled serenity and his single purpose were his strength.

In 1613 he felt that his work in Germany was accomplished and finally returned to Italy. His life there for the next six years was a triumph of the spiritual grace that was in him. Wherever he went men flocked to look upon the saint and to ask his blessing or counsel. More than once the friars had to smuggle him out of the town to avoid the continuous incursions of the crowds into the friary to gain his blessing or his prayers. In 1618 he was again withdrawn from the missionary labour he loved, and commissioned by the Pope to negotiate peace between the Duke of Savoy and the Spaniards concerning the Mantuan succession. The next year, at the Pope's command, he undertook an embassy to Spain on behalf of the Neapolitan estates, to bring to the king's notice the iniquitous tyranny of the viceroy, the Duke of Ossuna. He bade farewell to Italy, knowing that he would not return. He died at Lisbon on 22 July, 1619. At once his body was taken possession of by King Philip as the body of a saint, and secretly transported to the royal convent of Poor

Clares at Villafranca in Galicia ; and from all the Catholic princes, with whom he had had dealings, came requests to the Holy See for his beatification.[26]

(ii)

Giacinto da Casale brings us into the midst of those events which for a time consolidated the Catholic power in Southern Germany, and promised yet further gains to the Catholic Church in the Protestant North.

In the history of the Counter-Reformation there is perhaps no more humiliating page from the point of view of the Catholic apologist, than that which tells how, in the hey-day of its triumphant march, the Catholic power in Germany was thrown back by political animosities and intrigues amongst the Catholic princes themselves. As has been often pointed out, the weakness of Protestantism throughout the long struggle of the Counter-Reformation lay in the religious disunion of the Protestant bodies ; the weakness of Catholicism in the political disunion of the Catholic powers. Constantly in critical moments the Catholic States betrayed the cause of their common faith for the sake of their separate political ambitions ; and in no instance more lamentably to the political interests of Catholicism than in the events which resulted in the Thirty Years War. It is, of course, a question whether the spiritual interests of Catholicism would have been ultimately benefited by its political ascendancy ; politics and religion are seldom close friends even when they are close allies ; yet the fact remains that the political disunion of the Catholic States, which resulted in the Thirty Years War, not only arrested the growing ascendancy of Catholicism in Germany and eventually welded Northern Germany into a strong Protestant power but further gave the Protestant powers the political ascendancy in Europe, notwithstanding the abortive military glory of France under Louis

[26] See the letters of the Archduke Ferdinand and the Duke of Bavaria in *Bullar. Ord. Cap.* II, p. 292 ; IV, p. 154. The process was at once begun by the diocesan ordinaries, but it was not until 1783 that Lorenzo was beatified. (*Bullar. Ord. Cap.* IX, p. 172.) He was canonised by Leo XIII in 1881. Lorenzo's voluminous writings are being prepared for publication by the Capuchins of Venice.

XIV. In the end perhaps Catholicism was spiritually the stronger for being shorn of political power and prestige ; yet in the mighty struggle of the seventeenth century, who could have ventured to predict it ? At the moment Protestant political ascendancy had everywhere meant the forcible suppression of Catholicism. So much must be said if we are rightly to judge of the part taken by such men as Giacinto da Casale in the events of their time.

Giacinto, by right of birth Conte d'Alfiano,[27] was one of the most powerful preachers of his day ; to an aristocratic training at the Court of Mantua he united sound scholarship and extraordinary holiness of life. By preference he would have chosen the primitive hermitage of his Order with occasional excursions into the world of men to preach the Word of God. He loved solitude and only imperative duty drew him from it ; he shrank from honours and applause with a sensitive shrinking. Spare and emaciated in build and of a delicate constitution, he seemed to live by spiritual vitality ; his eyes, as seen in his portrait, were frank and fearless.

He had first come to Germany in 1606, and had won repute in Prague by his fervent preaching ; he had worked too to bring about a reconciliation between Rudolf II and Matthias of Hungary. Then he had returned to Italy where his preaching wrought marvels of conversions and excited extraordinary enthusiasm.[28]

In 1613 came his first diplomatic mission : in that year he was commissioned by the Pope to accompany Cardinal Madruzzi to the diet of Ratisbon. It was a momentous assembly inasmuch as it directly led up to the trial of strength which had long been foreseen. The princes of the Protestant Union would not recede from their demand for an elected Aulic Council which would strengthen their cause ; the princes of the Catholic League were equally determined to

[27] Marcellinus de Pise : *Annales*, t. III, p. 673, *seq.* ; *Bullar. Ord. Cap.* III, pp. 229-289 ; P. Venazio da Lago Santo : *Apostola e Diplomatico : Il P. Giacinto da Casale Montferrato, Cappuccino* (Milano, 1886) ; *Rocco da Ceasinale*, op. cit., II, p. 539, *seq.*

[28] "*Fu il P. Giacinto ammirabo da tutta Europa e un oracolo di dottrina e un exemplare di virtu e legittimo erede d'un spirito veramente apostolico e venuto non solo un altro S. Bernardo un secondo S. Giovanni da Capistrano ma anche un nuovo Giona un altro S. Paolo anzi qual uomo calabo dal Cielo.*" Vita del P. Giacinto, MS. in the General Archives of the Capuchins, Rome, Arm. A., fol. 6. We shall elsewhere refer to the report of his preaching at Piacenza in 1617, see *infra*, chap. xii.

I.N.R.I.
R.P.HYACINT. Casalen. Capuccin. Verbi Dei
Concionator feruentissimus.
Audite, et auribus percipite. Date Dño Deo Vestro gloriam
antequam contenebrescat, et, antequam offendant pedes vestri
ad montes caliginosos.

FRA GIACINTO DA CASALE

From a portrait by Philippe Sadeler CIRCA 1623

make no concession. There was the newly elected emperor, Matthias, bidding for the support of both parties ; and in a measure committed to the Protestant party. Giacinto da Casale threw all his eloquence into the support of the League and against the policy of concession. To allow equal representation to the Protestants in the Council would, he urged, mean nothing else than the enslavement of the Catholic Church to the Protestant chariot. Without any doubt he was right ; and without any doubt, too, the Protestants knew he was right. Tolerance, as we have already remarked, was an unrecognised word in the religious vocabulary of the early seventeenth century. Men did not fight for the right to tolerate what they did not agree with, but to bring their opponents under their heel. Liberty of conscience meant liberty for my conscience, not for yours ; as Cromwell and his Puritans a little later taught the English. It was not for liberty of conscience that the Protestant princes sought to strengthen their position in the one imperial institution which they did not dominate, or in which they did not hold the balance to their own advantage. What they had gained they meant to hold, whatever its legality; and to increase it if they could. That was the plain position and the Protestant princes would have laughed with scorn at any man who thought them capable of taking another. Giacinto da Casale by his championship of the claims of the Catholic League might win their hostility, but he would not thereby lose their respect. What in the circumstances was perhaps stranger was that in spite of his uncompromising attitude towards concession, he won the warm regard of the Emperor Matthias and his consort, the Empress Anna, who invited Giacinto to establish the Capuchins in Ratisbon, and assisted in state at the laying of the foundation stone of the friary.[29] When Giacinto returned to Rome the following year, he was received with marked favour by the Pope and Cardinal Ludovisi.[30] Popular rumour spoke of his elevation to the cardinalate ; but when this came to the ears of Giacinto, he

[29] *Chron. Bavar. Cap. Prov.*, p. 14. The empress Anna was a princess of the house of Mantua, at whose court Giacinto had been trained in early youth. See her letter to him, dated Sept. 26, 1607, conveying to him part of her collection of relics. *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, III, pp. 239-240.

[30] See letter of Paul V to the Elector Schweikard, Archbishop of Mainz, in *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, III, p. 240.

hurriedly left Rome and went on a preaching tour to Venice. The cardinal's hat was no temptation to him nor any honours the world could give. Yet he had one weakness. He dearly loved holy relics. He accepted some relics from the Pope, as he had already accepted some from the Emperor and Empress. All his life he collected relics wherever he went. He made the Capuchins rich with them.

For seven years he laboured in Italy before he was to return again to Germany ; they were years of marvellous fruitfulness in the renovation of the religious life of many an Italian city, as we shall see elsewhere.

In the meantime, events were moving fast in Germany towards the trial of strength between Catholicism and Protestantism, which had long been foreseen as inevitable by the leaders of the Catholic League. The revolution in Bohemia brought matters to a head. The luckless Elector-Palatine, Frederick V, accepted the crown of a brother prince, in violation of the tradition which ruled the princely houses, with the purpose of putting himself at the head of the Protestant party. For awhile militant Protestantism renewed its energy not only in Germany but in France and the Alpine valleys. The battle of Weissberg put an end to the adventure of the Elector-Palatine in Bohemia, and brought him under the ban of the empire. Bavaria took possession of the Palatinate, and the Protestant union was dissolved. In the Valtellina the Catholics rose up against their Calvinist oppressors, and Austria and Spain occupied the passes in the Grisons. In the meanwhile the Emperor Matthias had been succeeded by Ferdinand II—Ferdinand the staunch Catholic and the one Hapsburg who might have given body to the shadowy imperial title, had the issue been left between him and the Protestant North.

But now the political ambitions of the Catholic Powers begin to cross his path. France straightway objects to the occupation of the Grison passes. In consideration of the part taken by him in the Catholic League, Duke Maximilian of Bavaria claims the electoral dignity forfeited by Frederick V ; thereby the Catholics would have a majority in the electoral college, and the imperial dignity would be secured to a Catholic prince. But Spain at the moment is coquetting with James I of England, father-in-law of Frederick V, and

hesitates to support the claim of Bavaria ; and France has no wish to see the Hapsburg grow stronger by an alliance with Bavaria to the further diminution of the power of the Protestant states. Neither Spain nor France is disposed to forgo her own separate political ambitions for the sake of religion in Germany.

Ferdinand II, anxious as he was to reward Duke Maximilian with the vacant electorship, hesitated in the face of the disapproval of these two powers.

In this predicament, Gregory XV, the newly elected Pope, despatched Giacinto to Germany to urge upon the Emperor the necessity in the Catholic interest of conferring the electorship upon a Catholic prince, and preferably upon the Duke of Bavaria who was regarded in Rome as the sincerest champion of the Catholic cause ; and Giacinto, moreover, was instructed to win over to Bavaria's support the other Catholic princes of the empire, amongst them Schweikard, the Elector-Archbishop of Mainz, whose regard for Giacinto's judgment was known in Rome.[31]

The importance of Giacinto's appointment is evident from Maximilian's fervent letter of thanks to the Pope ; the sending of Giacinto, he wrote, was a proof of the Pope's solicitude for " the afflicted state of the Catholic religion in Germany " ; he protested that in seeking the electoral dignity his one purpose was to place the Catholic religion in honour and security, and to vindicate the authority of the imperial majesty against the attempt of the rebellious states to subvert it ; thus did he hope to bring peace to Germany.[32] Coming from Maximilian no one can doubt the sincerity of his statement.

That Giacinto regarded the preferment of the Duke as a decided gain to the Catholic cause, is evident from the confi-

[31] See the Pope's letters recommending Giacinto to the three ecclesiastical electors and the other princes, in *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, III, pp. 255-266 ; Giacinto had already acted as Schweikard's agent in Rome in 1614 ; *ibid.*, p. 240.

See also the letter of Gregory XV to Schweikard, *ibid.*, p. 266, and the important letters of 10 September, 1622, to the three electors and princes requesting that Giacinto be heard in the meeting of the princes at Ratisbon ; *ibid.*, pp. 272-277.

[32] See Maximilian's letter to the Pope, in *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, III, p. 245. The duke had a year earlier applied to Paul V to send Giacinto to accompany him on his expedition to aid the emperor against the Bohemian rising, but the Pope had refused. See Giacinto's letter to the Cardinal Secretary, *ibid.*, p. 246.

dential letter he wrote to the Pope, on 12 September, 1621, announcing the Emperor's decision to confer the electorship on the Duke, "subject to certain conditions."[33]

To gain the Duke's assent to these conditions, Giacinto then went to Bavaria. He found the Duke at Straubingen, on the eve of invading the Palatinate. Giacinto accompanied him on this expedition, and the Duke having agreed to the Emperor's terms, Giacinto celebrated the rout of Mansfeld by saluting the Duke as the future elector in the cathedral of Heidelberg.

But the goodwill of Spain had yet to be secured before the emperor would actually confer the dignity; and a few weeks later Giacinto received orders from the Pope to proceed to the court of Madrid and any other court as might be deemed needful to complete the success already attained.[34] So towards the end of October, Giacinto hurried to the Spanish Court. Expedition was necessary, for England was negotiating the Spanish marriage and the question of the electorate was amongst the points under discussion. Of the promised relief to the English Catholics, which the English ambassador held out as a certain consequence of the marriage, Giacinto was altogether sceptical; and in that he proved a shrewder judge of affairs than did Père Joseph du Tremblay when later the French marriage was arranged. Giacinto spent the greater part of a year in Madrid:[35] not altogether as a diplomat. He preached the Lenten course of 1622; and such were the crowds who flocked to hear him, that it was necessary to erect a pulpit in one of the public squares.

Whether he had any direct relations with the Prince of Wales during his stay at the Court, I know not; but a later event would seem to point to some friendly understanding with the English Prince. His companion, Fra Zaccaria Boverio da Saluzzo, we know had some conversations on

[33] *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, III, p. 246. The electorship, as is known, was at first conferred on Maximilian personally for his lifetime only, and not on the Bavarian house.

[34] *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, III, p. 241; cf. *ibid.*, pp. 266-270.

[35] The question of the co-operation of Spain and Austria in the Grisons evidently formed part of his negotiations. See the letter addressed to him at this time by the Archduke Leopold, *ibid.*, pp. 247. The anxiety with which his return to Germany was awaited is expressed in a letter of the Archduke Charles; *ibid.*, p. 248.

religion with Prince Charles, and was so impressed by his goodwill that he wrote a book for the Prince's instruction.[36]

When towards the end of the summer, Giacinto returned to Vienna, he bore with him the assurance of the King of Spain's personal goodwill towards Maximilian; though in truth Spain did not regard with too good a will the increasing power of the Duke whose success and popularity seemed a slur on the House of Austria.

Giacinto preached during the following Advent and Lent at Ratisbon, and worked incessantly to support the reforming efforts of the Duke Maximilian in Bavaria and the Palatinate; and amongst other achievements procured the rehabilitation of the currency, the depreciation of which told severely on the poorer people. He strove, too, to avert the threatened war with France over the Grison passes. Immediately on his return to Germany, he had despatched a letter to the King of France, and this had been followed by a mission to Paris, entrusted to his confrère, Valeriano Magno. Louis XIII in a long-delayed reply committed himself to nothing; he merely begged Giacinto to believe that what he was doing he was doing solely for the glory of God, and expressed the joy it was to receive a letter from him. But all these good words did not prevent France from forming an alliance with the Protestant powers.

Giacinto was not deceived as to the impending crisis; and he now transferred himself to Brussels[37] to negotiate co-operation between the Spaniards and the Elector Maximilian against Christian of Brunswick; and from there he despatched his fellow Capuchin, Alexander d'Ales, to England, to negotiate secretly at the English Court for some relief of the Catholics in England, and to open the way to an understanding between the Duke of Bavaria and James I. But beyond fair words, nothing seems to have come of this mission.[38] He was at Brussels when Gregory XV died and

[36] *Orthodoxa consultatio de ratione veræ fidei agnoscendæ et amplectandæ: in communen omnium veræ religionis studiosorum gratiam et utilitatem, aucta uberius illustrata et in duas partes distributa . . . auctore R. P. Zacharia Boverio Salutiensi* (Romæ, 1635). In the dedication to Card. Antonio Barberini, we are told that the book was written ten years previously for the instruction of Charles, Prince of Wales, as a result of familiar conversations with the prince concerning religion.

[37] See the Pope's letters to the Archduchess Isabella and to Spinola, May 7, 1622. *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, III, pp. 270-271; *ibid.*, pp. 278-279.

[38] *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, III, p. 248. See also the interesting letter of the Nuncio to Urban VIII, concerning this mission; *ibid.*, p. 249.

Urban VIII was elected Pope. Giacinto hoped now to be relieved of his diplomatic duties ; his heart was in the friar's apostolate ; courts and diplomacy were distasteful to his spirit.[39] Moreover, Gregory XV had been his friend and of a like mind to himself. He was not so sure of Gregory's successor. But Urban VIII confirmed Giacinto's commission.[40]

We next find Giacinto in Paris in an endeavour to come to some agreement with France. Louis XIII received him with marked honours and it was agreed as a basis of further negotiations that Austria and Spain should surrender the Valtellina and the Grison passes to the Pope, to be occupied by Papal troops.[41] To this agreement it may be noted Père Joseph du Tremblay was a party ; it was the first occasion of the meeting of the two friars. That Giacinto did not fully trust the French Capuchin is evident from his complaint that Père Joseph would not fully reveal what was in his mind.[42]

Without delay Giacinto returned to Germany to win over the Austrian princes to the agreement ; thence to Rome to secure the assent of the Sovereign Pontiff. Urban VIII was not too willing to undertake the burden ; he drew back before the expense of holding the passes, but Giacinto pleaded that only so could peace be maintained between the empire on the one side and France and her allies, Savoy and Venice, on the other. Eventually the Pope consented, and Giacinto went back to Germany.

He was again in Rome in 1625, and for a time he gave himself mainly to the work he loved best, the work of the evangelist. Yet his interest in Germany did not cease, he was in constant correspondence with the Catholic princes and acted as their agent at the Papal Court.[43] The renewed menace from France, due to Richelieu's rise to power, occupied much of his attention. With a single mind to the interests of Catholicism, he still strove to bring about an

[39] Whilst in Brussels he established the Confraternity of the Knights of the Passion. The confraternity was limited to forty members of noble blood. They undertook to assist at the Devotion of the Forty Hours, and to have a care for prisoners and orphans and others in need. The confraternity was approved by Urban VIII in 1626. *ibid.*, p. 88, *seq.*

[40] *ibid.*, p. 277.

[41] See the letter of the Archduke Leopold to Giacinto, *ibid.*, p. 250.

[42] cf. Fagniez, op. cit., I, p. 196.

[43] cf. *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, III, pp. 251-253.

understanding between France and the Elector Maximilian: it is evident that upon such an agreement he based his main hope for securing the Catholic interest in the empire. Was it that he distrusted the political ambition of the house of Hapsburg or its record of weakness in the past? That he distrusted the religious policy of Spain is evident from a sermon he preached whilst he was at the Spanish Court, when he denounced the king's interference with the liberties of the Church, and prophesied Divine judgment on the royal house. Once again, during his stay in Rome, he came into negotiations with Père Joseph du Tremblay. The French Capuchin had been commissioned by Richelieu to obtain the Pope's approval of the French policy in regard to the Valtellina, and to bring about some understanding with Giacinto concerning the restoration of the Palatinate to the heirs of Frederick V. The meeting of the two Capuchins was stormy; it was the clash of two characters and two points of view utterly dissimilar; of the prophet and the politician.[44] With Giacinto there was but one question to be considered, the direct interest of the Catholic religion; with Père Joseph—well, of Père Joseph's point of view many books have been written, and yet men question.

And in Germany itself things were not going as well as was desirable between the Catholic princes themselves. True, in the Catholic states, the Church was being reinstated and reorganised with a firm hand; but already the political disunion between the Catholic States, healed for a time in the struggle with the Protestant union, was beginning to show itself again; the suspicion of Hapsburg ambition towards a centralised monarchy was again raising its head; and again Maximilian and other princes were anxious for Giacinto's speedy return to act as intermediary between the princes. So in the summer of 1626 Giacinto received orders from the Pope to go back to Germany.[45] He set out on his journey with a premonition that it was his last; on his arrival at Genoa he was already sick unto death. By the advice of the doctors they carried him to Casale, his native town, hoping against hope that he might revive there. He died at Casale on 18 February, 1627.

[44] cf. Fagniez, op. cit., p. 214.

[45] *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, III, p. 283. See the Pope's letters to the princes and to Tilly and Wallenstein; *ibid.*, pp. 285-288.

(iii)

In relating the labours of Fra Giacinto da Casale for the Catholic cause in Germany we have mentioned the names of the friar, Valeriano Magno, whom we have seen employed in the same cause, and of Père Joseph du Tremblay, the French Capuchin.

Père Joseph Le Clerc du Tremblay, " the grey Cardinal " of history, enters much into the political affairs of Germany at this time, as he enters into all affairs upon which the iron Richelieu laid his hand. A marvellous genius was Père Joseph, to whom the world has not yet done justice, seeing in him mostly the shadow or the master—so uncertain is its judgment—of the masterful minister of Louis XIII. In this story we have met him in the mission-fields of Poitou, and as the founder of a religious congregation of reformed Benedictines ; we shall again meet him as the organiser of a gigantic missionary enterprise ; a man of many parts as will be seen.

In this place of our story, he enters as the cross-purpose in the council of the Capuchins concerned in the Catholic supremacy in Germany. We have seen him in opposition to Giacinto da Casale ; we shall see him again at a critical moment in European history, foiling the efforts of his fellow friars, Valeriano Magno and Diego de Queroga, in their endeavours to maintain the union of the Catholic German princes. It may be well, then, to pause in our relation of the Capuchin activities in Germany, to consider what manner of man was this redoubtable antagonist sprung from their own Order, and yet of a mould different from theirs.[46]

As has been said, Père Joseph was a man of many parts ; the disquieting thing for anyone who attempts to depict him is that he was not a man of simple character ; at least not

[46] cf. G. Fagniez, op. cit. ; J. Parmentier : *De Patris Josephi Capucini Publica Vita qualis ex ejus cum Richelio commerciis appareat* (Paris, 1877) ; L. Dedouvres : *Le Père Joseph devant l'histoire* (Angers, 1892) ; *Vie du R. P. Joseph de Paris du Sr. de Hautebresche* (Paris, 1889) ; *Le Père Joseph Polémiste* (Paris, 1895); *Le Père Joseph de Paris* in *Etudes Franciscaines* XXXIII, p. 78, *seq.* (Paris, 1921).

The eighteenth century biographies of Père Joseph are all written in the partisan spirit of the period. René Richards' *Histoire de la Vie du R. P. Joseph de Clerc du Tremblay* is a panegyric. The anonymous *Le Véritable Père Joseph* is a reply in the opposite spirit : so, too, is the account of him in Levassor's *Histoire Générale de l'Europe sous le règne de Louis XIII.*

yet has anyone penetrated to his simplicity. That he was consciously a lover of power, I doubt ; but by natural instinct he grasped at power, the power which shapes affairs. Ambition is writ large on everything he touched ; but that is no condemnation. His love of ruling the actions of others is at all times manifest ; yet that, too, need not condemn a man. Such inborn traits may well be the foundations of a generous service of God and mankind. That Père Joseph aspired to sanctity and the life dedicated to the holiest purpose, none can doubt who is not predisposed to doubt ; and but for his success there would have been but one judgment of him, however puzzling his complexity : a religious man, sincere even in his mistakes. His religious sincerity comes into question in connection with his incursion into politics ; and in that he differs from the Capuchin diplomatists with whom he frequently found himself in opposition. Of their sincerity and singleness of aim no doubt has been raised. Their diplomacy has been criticised, but of their single motive there has been no question ; they were manifestly the servants of the Church and of the Catholic cause.

To men of his day Père Joseph was a man who never revealed his ultimate thought ; was he himself quite sure of his ultimate thought ? There is a portrait of him showing us the man, spare, austere, of tenacious will and lofty thinking, but with a troubled uncertain look in his searching eyes. It is not far wrong of the Père Joseph of history.

And yet, that he had elements of spiritual and intellectual greatness only a bigot will deny. He was no charlatan.

Was he at heart a Capuchin ? In somes respects undoubtedly. Yet there is the persistent difficulty. It is always necessary in judging of his quality to add the qualifying phrase. Possibly, in whatever society Père Joseph found himself, he would have been " a man apart," not merely by sheer individuality but also by some negative quality.

But it is from the point of view of his religious profession that Père Joseph's politics are apt to be baffling. In following his political career, one is tempted at times to apply to him our Lord's warning to St. Peter, " He who takes the sword shall perish by the sword " : and it is perhaps in that moment of temptation that we get a true insight into Père Joseph's religious character, seeing in him the Peter who

loved his Master, but as yet did not understand his Master's spirit ; the Peter anxious to serve, thinking if need be to die by his Master's side ; yet still a stranger to his Master's heart. And this trait of spiritual immaturity seems stamped upon all his achievements. As a leader in the mystical life of prayer, it has been said that he leads with the sureness of personal experience in the first steps, but is as one inexperienced when he ventures further afield ;[47] in his missionary organisations one feels that there is more of " the prudence of the world " (put, it is true, to a noble purpose) than of the simple faith that moves mountains ; his daring military project for the recovery of the Holy Land and the epic poem with which he would fire Christendom to undertake the crusade, leave one unconvinced of true spiritual vision. In a word, the Peter of the sword. Had he been a lesser man, insistence on the limitation of his spiritual quality would be ungenerous. It is the greatness of his ambition and success which compels criticism.

That he contributed to the establishment of the Protestant political ascendancy in Germany and Europe cannot be denied ; that he was in company with not a few churchmen of repute in the line of policy he advocated, must be remembered ; that he was an instrument of Divine Providence for the ultimate severance of the Catholic cause from the political entanglements which were its encompassing weakness, may well be believed ; that he was conscious of any conflicting disloyalty with his professed zeal for the Church, may unhesitatingly be denied.

A declaration in one of his letters gives the key to his political action : " from France must come the remedy (for the evils of Christendom) as being the heart of the (Christian) body."[48] To strengthen and exalt France, to the end that France should impose peace on Christendom, and then become the centre of a vast missionary activity—that undoubtedly was his dream and ambition ; and there at least was nothing ignoble. That in his vision of the Church triumphant he saw an ascendant France as the world's saviour—well, saints have had the same dream, only it was

[47] *Henri Bremond*, op. cit., II, p. 181.

[48] " *C'est de la France que doit venir le remède comme estant le coeur de ce corps* " (Letter MS. to the prioress of Lencloître quoted in Fagniez, op. cit., I, p. 72).

not the France of Richelieu's ambition they dreamed of, but the France ascendant in the spirit of the Crucified Redeemer. But that was not a dream that would have come to the Peter of the sword on the eve of the crucifixion. Yet Peter loved his Master even then ; and of Père Joseph's love of Christ and His Church the witness is abundant.

He approved of Richelieu's action in driving the Pontifical troops from the Valtellina,[49] and so broke faith with the Pope ; but when Père Joseph was a party to the agreement with Fra Giacinto, Richelieu was not yet in power, and Joseph was praying for a man who would save France and Christendom. In Richelieu he believed he had found the man ; and having found the man of his ideal, it was characteristic of Joseph to be loyal to him ; he was always loyal to those in whom he believed. Men have debated whether Joseph was Richelieu's tool or his guide ; it is probably the truth that he was neither ; rather it would seem that the two men were yoked together in a common ambition to make France the predominant power in the world's politics; Richelieu thinking first of France as a secular power, Joseph of France as the Catholic power ; and each interacting on the other. Certainly to Joseph the France of Richelieu's ambition was the sword which was eventually to smite the unbeliever, be the unbeliever Protestant, Turk, or Catholic ; for to Joseph the Hapsburg was an unbeliever in that he stood in the way of Père Joseph's ideal of a united and Catholic Christendom.

Not improbably Joseph's vast conception of a new crusade which for awhile enlisted the diplomatic consideration of the Catholic powers, represents the purpose of his political activities in its purest form ; and it probably was the failure of that project which drove him to the baser levels of world politics.

The scheme briefly was to unite the Catholic powers in a determined effort to recover the Holy Land and thereby effect at the same time a better mutual understanding between them, based on an interest which was outside their mutual jealousies and separate ambitions. The scheme was thought out and planned with that meticulous regard for

49 cf. Fagniez, op. cit., I, p. 196, note 1. Still Urban VIII's indecisive policy concerning the Valtellina must be taken into account.

detail which made Joseph an ideal organiser. The crusade would be international in the best sense ; not a mere alliance of governments, but carried through by the Catholic manhood of Europe. The army was to be recruited with the assent and support of the governments, but it would be organised and directed by the new order of knighthood, the *Milice chrétienne*, under the commandership of Carlo Gonzaga, duc de Nevers, and heir presumptive to the Duchy of Mantua. Père Joseph laid the scheme before the Pope during his visit to Rome in 1616, and it met with the Pontiff's approval. Savoy and the Italian States promised support ; Spain dallied with the idea ; encouragement came from the Emperor and the Archduke Ferdinand. National commanders were then appointed to organise the crusade in Germany, Spain and Italy, in association with the duc de Nevers. At a meeting of the leaders at Olmutz, on November 17, 1618, the articles of organisation were agreed to and the *Milice chrétienne* was solemnly proclaimed at Vienna on 8 March, 1619. Its declared object was to maintain concord within the Christian commonwealth, and to extend its domain ; to defend it against the infidels and to redeem Christian captives. Ambassadors were then sent to the great powers and to the Pope to secure formal approval and support. France hesitated to give overt approval, as she had no wish to break immediately with the Turk ; she suggested that the Pope should take the lead. The French king, however, sent Père Joseph to Spain to secure the formal adhesion of the Spanish Court : but now Spain grew wary suspecting the motive of the French. Then Austria grew suspicious and drew back. Negotiations dragged on for seven years. In 1625, the Pope made a final effort to arouse interest in the project, but it was now recognised that there was no unity amongst the Catholic powers, and the carrying out of the scheme was indefinitely postponed.[50] As one biographer has remarked, had the crusade taken place, there would probably have been no Thirty Years War, and later on, no Eastern Question.[51]

Curiously, at the same time that Père Joseph went to Rome to lay his scheme before the Pope in 1616, the Capu-

[50] See the letters of Urban VIII in *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, V, pp. 49-50.
[51] Fagniez, op. cit., I, p. 158.

chin Valeriano Magno, in co-operation with king Sigismund of Poland, had begun a similar organisation under the title of Knights of the Conception, to defend the Christian borders against the Turks. The Pope approved this organisation in 1617 :[52] but the outbreak of war with Sweden prevented any further development ; moreover Poland was to be included in the *Milice chrétienne*.

Not unlikely the withdrawal of the Spanish and Austrian support from the proposed crusade embittered Père Joseph, and threw him back on the political supremacy of France as the one hope of a future united Christendom. And with the acknowledged failure of the *Milice chrétienne*, Richelieu came into power. From the first, Richelieu had plainly expressed his doubts of the *Milice chrétienne* as a means of uniting the Christian powers ; he gauged the European situation better than Père Joseph. Yet it is to the honour of Père Joseph that even though his dream came to nought, he dreamed his dream of a united Christendom fighting for a common good instead of Christian people fighting each against the other. In that at any rate he was a Franciscan and a Catholic. Better, too, had he persisted in his first dream in spite of its failure ; but Père Joseph fell short of the greatness which persists in face of failure: success was needed to feed the flame of his energy. He now turned to Richelieu, and the world lost an inspiring idealist in the political realist. That this did not make for his own happiness we know ; the years brought him the disillusionment of one who had clogged the wings of his spirit with the dust of earth. Almost to the end he was still peering into the future, wistful that his dream might be realised ; but even of that it may be doubted whether he finally had any hope.[53] The war between the nations which had been let loose was still dragging out its cry of agony when he died in 1638. Two things only might assuage the bitterness of his disillusionment ; far and wide on the borders of Christian civilisation and in the wilds beyond, the missionaries he had sent forth were working manfully to broaden the kingdom of the Divine Master he loved ; for that he loved to the end the Lord of his youth, let no one doubt. And at home in France

[52] *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, pp. 181-182.
[53] cf. Henri Bremond, op. cit., II, pp. 191-192.

the seed of his early enthusiasms had blossomed in provinces returned to religion, and in the convents of the *Filles de Calvaire* which enshrined in faithful remembrance the mystical fervour of his verdant years. But these, the real achievements of his restless life, we relate elsewhere.

(iv)

With Valeriano Magno we are back again amongst the Capuchins who laboured with love for Germany.

Valeriano was of the family of Magni of Milan, who claimed to have been driven from Friuli when Attila, king of the Huns, invaded Italy. Different branches of the family had settled in Venice, Naples and Milan ; and had grown wealthy. Though born in Milan, Valeriano was educated in Prague, his father having migrated there in the service of the Emperor; and his brilliance attracted the attention of the nuncio, Cardinal Aldobrandini, later Pope ClementVIII, who wished him to enter the Papal Court. But Valeriano had been deeply impressed by the preaching of Lorenzo da Brindisi, and in consequence became a Capuchin at Prague in 1602.

His contemporaries in speaking of him made great play upon his family name ; " great by name and great by fame " was the general verdict of his time.[54] " Philosopher, theologian and diplomat " one epitaph calls him ; and he deserves the triple title in no ordinary degree. In whichever aspect you take him, he was a man amongst men. Yet the title by which he himself would prefer to be known is that of apostle. It was as the evangelist of God's kingdom that he was always happiest. Of several of the Capuchin preachers of this period, for instance Giacinto da Casale and Girolamo da Narni (whom we shall meet elsewhere), it was said by

[54] *Hic gradum siste viator—vide audi, et mirare—parva haec tumba—VALERIANUM— . . . prosapia magnum, sui abjectione seipso Majorem—pietate doctrina et rebus praeclare gestis—inter Fratres Minores suo aevo—facile Maximum,*" etc. (*Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, p. 204). See also in the epitaph composed by Guidobald, Archbishop of Salzburg : *En tibi, Viator Valerianum Magnum . . .Magnarum tamen rerum ingens compendium : qui magnus inter Minores,*" etc. (*ibid.*, p. 203). Also the nuncio Caraffa : " *In Bohemia Archiepiscopus, non solum sua vigilantia sed etiam virorum opera, specialiter Valeriani Magni . . . vere viri Magni, verbo, opere et corpore,*" etc. Ardinghelli, IV, p. 173, in *Valdimiro Bonari de Bergamo*, op. cit., p. 197.

contemporaries that they were as " another Paul." Looking back across the intervening centuries I know of none of them who seems to bear a greater similarity to the character of the apostle of the Gentiles than Valeriano Magno. " All things to all men " in his burning charity ; virile in his thought, decisive in his judgments, eloquent in his speech, fearing God but no man, bearing daily the solicitude for the Church he loved, ready in whatever way it came to him to do battle for the cause of Christ ; as patient in adversity as he was strong in action ; and at the end able to say truthfully that he hated no man but had loved all men with a true love—such was Valeriano of the Magni.[55]

He was but twenty-six when his preaching drew crowds to hear him, and his sermons were the talk of the imperial court. Amongst his first converts was the Prince of Lichenstein, he who had led the Protestant interest at the court in the days of Rudolf II. Three years later, in 1616, Valeriano was the leader of the Capuchins sent at the request of King Sigismund to evangelise Podolia, and it was during this mission that he conceived the idea of forming the military order of the Knights of the Conception. The scheme came to nothing, as we have seen ; but it was the beginning of the close friendship between Valeriano and Sigismund and Sigismund's successor Vladislas. Then came the truce between Sigismund and Russia and the Capuchins were withdrawn from Podolia. Valeriano returned to Vienna. In 1621 and again in 1623 he was sent by the Emperor to the court of Louis XIII to negotiate concerning the affairs in the Grisons. But his heart was not in diplomacy. He was above all things the apostle, burning to win back to the faith the lost tribes of Israel. Manfully he worked with Cardinal Harrasch to catholicise Bohemia, preaching and writing incessantly. He was an encyclopædic writer ; polemicist, theologian and philosopher ; and withal a ceaseless worker in all affairs that concerned the apostolate for which he lived. In 1624 he was appointed Provincial of his Order in Bohemia; but this brought him no respite from wider labours. Yet that

[55]As P. Valdimiro da Bergamo has remarked (I *Cappuccini Milanesi*, op. cit. p. 218), Valeriano Magno deserves an adequate critical biography. As a man of affairs and as a philosopher, he has strangely been forgotten. It is an instance of the inadequate treatment hitherto accorded to the history of the Counter-Reformation.

he loved the retirement of his friar's cell is shown by the facility with which he became engrossed in his writing of books whenever the opportunity came to him ; and his books were for the thinkers, not for the crowd. " A strenuous and constant assertor of the true, tenacious of the right " is one summing up of his character ;[56] and it is borne out in all he did.

There was the settlement of the affairs of the Church in the Austrian dominions to which the Emperor Ferdinand set his hand in 1626 ; and which was formally promulgated in the Edict of Restitution in 1627. Valeriano attended the imperial council convoked by the Emperor in Vienna to consider the matter. Three questions were set for consideration : the extirpation of heresy, the propagation of the Faith, and the restitution of alienated Church property. Valeriano stood out boldly against the policy of forced conversions of any character ; such conversions he held were apt to be merely an insincere conformity. He claimed that the bringing back of heretics to the Church was the proper work of missionaries, and he proposed that the country be divided into missionary " regions" to be worked by the different religious orders. As to the restored Church property in Bohemia he won the consent of the meeting that it should not be given to the religious orders but be set apart to establish four new bishoprics and two seminaries. It was not without opposition he gained his point : and his claim that the Caroline University in Prague should be restored to its original purpose under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop, and not be transferred to the Jesuits, was the beginning of a misunderstanding between good men which was to cost Valeriano much suffering in the end.[57] But throughout his life he never counted the cost to himself. It was the same when he was sent to Rome by Cardinal Harrasch in 1628 to lay before the Pope an account of affairs in Bohemia. He was commissioned to obtain the abolition of a religious society of women, for what reason I know not.[58] But they were influential inasmuch as they were connected with persons in power. Valeriano was never forgiven for his part

[56] *Biblioth. Script. Ord.*, p. 243. Concerning Valeriano as a writer see *infra*, chap. xiv.

[57] *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, p. 189.

[58] cf. Valdimiro da Bergamo, op. cit.

in their suppression. So he was all his life a man who won friends and raised up enemies by his sheer integrity. Cardinal Harrasch, in his difficult task of reforming his diocese, relied upon Valeriano for counsel and support much as the valiant Robert Grosseteste of Lincoln at an earlier date relied upon friar Adam Marsh ; and in truth there is a marked similarity of character between the two friars.

In 1628 the cardinal obtained from the Pope an order that Valeriano should be relieved of the office of Provincial Minister and left free to assist that prelate in his work for the Catholic cause in Bohemia ;[59] and the following year Valeriano was appointed prefect of the new Capuchin missions in Bohemia, Austria and Silesia.[60] That was the work in which his heart lay. Yet again he is called from it in 1630 when the Pope appointed him to attend the diet of Ratisbon as adviser on behalf of the Emperor to the Papal envoy Giulio Mazarini, who later by a strange turn of fortune's wheel was to succeed Richelieu as chief minister in France.

The diet marked a momentous crisis in the unhappy chain of events which were to throw back the forward march of political Catholicism. Who could have foreseen that the death of a petty prince in Italy would not only pit the Catholic powers against each other, but lead to the division of the Catholic forces in Germany and to the humiliation by the Catholic League of the most Catholic Emperor since Charles V ? Yet that was what the disputed succession in the Duchy of Mantua led to—that and the appointment of the seemingly invincible Wallenstein to lead the imperial army. The Mantuan question had thrown France and the Pope together in a determination to curb the Hapsburg pretensions in Italy ; jealousy of the upstart Wallenstein and of the growing power of the Emperor had thrown the Catholic League into alliance with French diplomacy. In the councils of the Catholic princes the question of religion was relegated as a side issue, and the uppermost thought was a question of territory and their separate political interests. It was a festival for the cynics. But there were others besides the cynics, men who in the welter of politics were genuinely

[59] *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, p. 182.
[60] *ibid.*, pp. 183-184.

concerned, each in his own way, how to save a situation so hopelessly muddled from ending in a debacle of all their hopes for the future of the Catholic Faith. Whether they were wise or unwise in the parts they separately took is a matter on which different men will hold different opinions.

The diet met ; and its interest to our story lies in the fact that across the table of dispute Capuchin worked against Capuchin : on the one side Père Joseph setting his keen brain to hold the Catholic electors apart from the Emperor ; on the other side Valeriano Magno working to win back the Catholic League to the Emperor's support. To Père Joseph the Hapsburg ascendancy, as we have said, meant the frustration of his dream of an eventually united Christendom. To Valeriano Magno the disunion between the Emperor and the League meant the cast-back of the Catholic cause in Germany. For the sake of the greater cause, Valeriano had counselled the emperor to relinquish Mantua. But he would not counsel the dismissal of Wallenstein, believing as he did in Wallenstein's good faith and in his unique ability to lead the imperial army to victory.[61] Père Joseph gained the day. Ferdinand is said to have remarked : " The Capuchin has six electoral caps in his hood."

Valeriano's independent action did not commend him to Urban VIII ; nor again did his attitude in the events that followed upon the diet of Ratisbon. As he had foreseen, the dismissal of Wallenstein meant the defeat and virtual disruption of the imperial forces. Ferdinand, beaten in the field, was forced to make terms with the Elector of Saxony and his Protestant allies. These demanded the revocation of the Edict of Restitution which had given back to the Church the property alienated since 1555. The League and its partisans were at once in arms against any concession in the matter of ecclesiastical property. But Bohemia was overrun and occupied by the Protestants, and Austria was threatened; nor could the army of the League, as events proved, save the military situation. The disunion of the Catholic princes had done its work ; in that Valeriano's judgment had proved correct. Ferdinand was practically helpless to withstand the

[61] *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, p. 190. Valeriano in 1632 went to Rome with Wallenstein's explanation and assurances of his policy. See letter of Urban VIII to Wallenstein, of July 1, 1632, in Valdimiro da Bergamo, *I Cappuccino Milanesi*, loc. cit.

Protestant demand ; yet at the same time any concession was denounced by his opponents at Ratisbon as unworthy of a Catholic prince. In this crisis Valeriano, supported by the Spanish Capuchin, Diego de Queroga,[62] the envoy of the Spanish King at the imperial court, counselled concession with a limitation. It was better, urged the Spanish Capuchin, to surrender property and save religion than to lose both.[63] The Edict of Restitution was therefore amended and its operation limited to securing to the Church the property possessed in the empire in 1624. Thereupon the Elector of Saxony withdrew from Bohemia and the Protestant alliance. The Capuchins in Bohemia sang a *Te Deum* for the deliverance : but others thought only of the lost property and the lost prestige, and did not forget the part played by Valeriano. Yet during the occupation of Prague by the Saxon Elector, Valeriano and the Capuchins had remained in the city to protect, as far as they could, the Catholics from the Lutheran soldiery, whilst many of his opponents fled.[64]

In the matter of the Polish succession on the death of Sigismund III, it was mainly through the advocacy of Valeriano at the imperial and Papal courts that Vladislas obtained the crown. The supporters of the younger prince Casimir had urged against Vladislas that he was a lukewarm Catholic inclined to favour the heretics; Valeriano, who knew the elder prince intimately, regarded the charge as untrue and a mere cry to discredit him. It was again a political move masking itself under the banner of religion. Events again proved the justness of Valeriano's judgment ; Poland had no more Catholic prince than Vladislas III. Throughout his reign Valeriano continued to be his adviser and friend ; and it was in conjunction with the king that Valeriano in 1634 laid before the Pope his project for an organised mission to work for the reunion of the Russian Church with the Holy See. A nuncio was indeed sent to

[62] Diego de Queroga was confessor to Phillip IV of Spain, who recommended him for the cardinalate, but Diego steadfastly refused the honour. He was frequently employed by the king in public affairs. cf. Pellegrino da Forli, op. cit., II, pp. 139-141.

[63] See the letters of the nuncio Baglione—Ranke, *Hist. of the Popes*, Bk. VII, Chap. V, loc. cit., p. 273.

[64] Vladislas III, in his letter to the Pope referred to later on, mentions Valeriano's conduct on this occasion as worthy of record in the annals of the Church. *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, p. 194.

Poland to take the matter in hand, but Valeriano's opponents at the Papal Court obtained that he should have no part in the projected scheme. The nuncio's efforts came to nothing.

In 1635 King Vladislas after his coronation petitioned the Pope to create Valeriano a cardinal. The petition was refused on the ground that the Capuchin was not a subject of the king. Vladislas' dignified reply is Valeriano's apologia; it is a record of his work for the rehabilitation of the Faith in Germany, and yet more a testimony to the simplicity of his character and purpose.[65]

But Valeriano was a man who knew not discouragement for the reason that his one thought was to do good as it came to him and to fulfil the duty at his hand. Whether it was applause or hostility that he met with, he continued his way preaching and writing incessantly and ever ready to take up another's burden when duty called. He traversed Poland as he had traversed Bohemia, holding conferences with the foremost of the Protestant ministers, until his Catholic opponents obtained an order from Rome silencing him for awhile. Then he returned to his friar's cell and wrote works that gained him fame in his day. But he could not long be silenced ; his silence left a gap in the Catholic defence and he was set free to come forth again in public. One of his notable converts in 1652 was the Landgrave Ernst of Hesse.[66] In the meantime the Pope had confided to Valeriano and the Capuchins, missions in Saxony and Hesse and a mission at Dantzic.[67] But the conversion of Ernst of Hesse let loose a flood of controversy and a fresh attack was made by the Lutheran theologians upon the Church and the Papacy. Valeriano took up the challenge and met it with lectures and writings. The controversy thus enkindled went on for several years. But whilst Valeriano was defending the Church against the Protestants, his opponents on the Catholic side launched a new attack against him. Anonymous accusations concerning his orthodoxy were sent to Rome. Valeriano, usually unheeding of opposition and slander, could not remain passive when his loyalty to the Church and

[65] *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, pp. 193-194.

[66] See Valeriano's own account of this conversion in *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, pp. 196-198.

[67] *ibid.*, p. 185.

the Faith was impugned, the less so as his Capuchin brethren were included in the insinuations made against himself. He sent his published treatises to Rome and wrote his *Apologia Valeriani.*[68] He was assured by the cardinals of the Propaganda Fide, to whom as an apostolic missionary he had addressed himself, that his innocence of the anonymous charges was proved. But the attacks dragged on. It is said that his opponents sent to Rome an edition of one of his treatises on the Papacy, with the negatives omitted; so that he was made to uphold the oppositive doctrine to what he really taught. That may be mere hearsay in the tumult of feeling in which the affair ended.

On the evening of 1 February, 1661, an imperial official armed with letters from the Holy Office, called at the Capuchin friary in Vienna and summarily arrested Valeriano and conducted him to the common jail. The arrest was made under cover of dark. No sooner, however, did the news spread than the city was in commotion. People paraded the streets crying : " Long live Valeriano ! Long live the Capuchins!" The Papal nuncio went immediately to the Emperor to ask explanations ; protests came from far and wide. The Capuchin Provincial hurried to Vienna and demanded that Valeriano should be tried before being condemned : " We ask no favour but only justice," he declared : " if Valeriano is guilty let him be condemned ; but before he is condemned let him be tried." Leopold, the Emperor, protested he was acting under orders from the Holy Office : but to calm the commotion he eventually released Valeriano on parole and confided him to the custody of the Archbishop of Salzburg ; and as a mark of his personal esteem sent him to Salzburg in an imperial carriage. The carriage was needed ; Valeriano, now seventy-five years of age and broken by his labours, was

[68] *Apologia Valeriani Magni contra imposituras Jesuitarum. Ad majorem gloriam Dei. Cui accessit ejusdem Epistola ad P. Ludovicum a Salice ejusdem Ordinis.* The title page bears no date, but in the foreword it is stated that the book was written in Vienna in 1655. Ernst of Hesse published a friendly reply, in which he sought to vindicate the Jesuits against Valeriano's charge that he himself had in a particular instance acted under their influence ; he evidently considered that Valeriano was unduly sensitive. The anonymous charges against him, which Valeriano attributed to a Jesuit preacher, concerned Valeriano's statement that the Roman primacy, as distinct from the personal primacy of St. Peter, could not be proved from Scripture *alone*, but from Scripture and Tradition. This was held by his anonymous adversary to " give away " the Catholic position !

unable to walk. At Salzburg the Archbishop and citizens came forth to meet him outside the city and conduct him with honour to the Capuchin friary where he was to abide pending a settlement of the case. The case was never settled on earth; for six months later, on July 25, Valeriano went to his eternal rest. During the months he lay sick in the friary, the citizens vied in doing him honour; and when he died they buried him with the pageantry he had refused during life. Then they must erect a statue to his honour and the Archbishop and nuncio must each contribute a lengthy epitaph celebrating his services to the Church and his high qualities. Valeriano's last words, as we have said, were that in his life he had hated no man but had loved all men. And those who knew him, knew he spoke the truth.

(v)

The Capuchins in Germany suffered much in common with the people during the Thirty Years War. The simple brevity of the Bavarian chronicle tells of these sufferings more eloquently than would many pages. Thus: "Father Leopold of the barons of Gunpenburg was murdered by the soldiers of Gustavus in 1631; Father Simon was put to death by the soldiery at the same time as Father Leopold. After that Gustavus took the Capuchins under his protection; but many friaries were plundered by the Swedes." "When the Swedes entered Dinkelspil, Sperrenter their leader ordered that the Capuchins should not be disturbed; but after his departure the Lutherans persecuted the friars, stoned them and violated their cemetery and killed Father Dominic." "At the taking of Straubingen by the Swedes, Duke Bernard vowed to put the inhabitants to the sword; but at the prayers of the Capuchins he relented. To save the town from tribute the Father Guardian gave the ciboria and reliquaries."[69] "In 1638 the French under Turenne took Neckersulm. The Capuchins opened their cloister to the

[69] According to Pellegrino da Forli (*Annali dei Cappuccini*, I, pp. 539-540), it was the Capuchin Thomas von Buchenstein whose pleading saved Straubingen. Later when the plague broke out, he laboured heroically on behalf of the sick. He died in 1643, and the people of Straubingen "mourned for him as for their father and benefactor."

women to save them from outrage. " For a time the province was almost disbanded ; no novices, no students. Many friars went to Italy. In 1634, eleven preachers, nine confessors, six clerics and seventeen lay-brothers died of the plague."[70]

Nevertheless at the close of the war, there were no less than one hundred and thirty friaries in Germany[71] not counting the mission stations from which the friars evangelised the countryside.

Meanwhile from the Tyrol and Switzerland, as well as from Brescia on the Italian side, Capuchins were again at work in the Valtellina and the Grisons, braving the tempestuous passions of the time. Their renewed missionary labours in these districts had been consecrated in 1622 by the martyrdom of the heroic Fidelis von Sigmaringen who whilst on a preaching tour was set upon by a band of the Grison soldiers and clubbed to death.[72] He was a doctor of law of Friburg, and had been a travelling tutor before he joined the Capuchins. The manifest innocence of his life and his simple eloquence made him a persuasive preacher. There was in him nothing of the fanatic as some ignorantly have asserted. His was a gentle spirit. He had but one passion—to win souls to Christ, for the love he had for them. His martyr's death did but crown a life of unobtrusive yet heroic saintliness.

Of many others too who worked selflessly and strenuously out of the limelight of publicity during those dread days of war and passion, much might be written. They were an army worthy of their great leaders.

[70] *Chron. Bavar. Cap. Prov.*, op. cit., *passim.*

[71] cf. *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, p. 366, *seq.*

[72] Fidelis was canonised by Benedict XIV in 1746. *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, VII, p. 359, *seq.* The story of his life and martyrdom, drawn from contemporary documents, and the Acts of his beatification, was published by P. Lucianus Montifontanes at Constanz, in 1674, under the title : *Probatica Sacra Cisarulana.* He was the first missionary of the Congregation of Propaganda Fide to suffer martyrdom.

CHAPTER XI

MORE MISSIONARY PROVINCES

(i)

We have already seen how in 1585 a colony of Capuchins was sent from Paris to Belgium at the request of the Spanish Governor General, Alessandro Farnese. There as elsewhere they made rapid progress; within forty years they had established over thirty friaries within the comparatively small area of Flanders, Brabant and the Walloon country.[1] They were brought into the country by Farnese to strengthen the Catholic cause and stem the advance of Protestantism; and of the first band of Capuchins was one, a Hollander, Johannes van Landen, who earlier had barely escaped the crown of martyrdom. For he was of the community of the Observant friars who were put to death at Gorcum; but because of his youth he was reprieved and banished the country. Then he had gone to France and had become a Capuchin. Of such mettle were many of the friars who helped to build up the Belgian province in its earliest days; men who had already suffered for the faith they held and were willing to suffer yet more. Amongst them were two Scots allied by birth with the royal Stuarts, whose story was often recounted in those days when men held their faith at a price.[2] They were William and John Forbes, both named

[1] cf. *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, p. 368, *seq.* In 1615 the friaries were constituted into two provinces. Flanders and Walloon. *ibid.*, p. 103.

[2] cf. *Alter Alexius, natione Scotus, nobile familia oriundus, nuper in Belgium felici S. Spiritus afflatu delatus et in familiam seraphici Patris S. Francisci capuccinorum adscriptus sub nomine F. Archangel . . . opera V. P. F. Faustini Diestensis ejusdem ordinis* (Coloniæ Agrippinæ, 1620). A French translation by M. Jacques Brousse was published in Paris in 1621 under the title: *Récit historique du R. P. Archange Ecossois.* An English translation by John Forbes was published at Douai in 1623. A MS. *Vita del P. F. Arcangelo di Forbes Scozzese* is in the Bibliotheca Ducale of Modena: *Rocco da Cesinale*, op. cit., I, p. 370, note 1; cf. Boverius, *Annales*, 1606, 38, *seq.*; *The Scots' Peerage*, ed. by Sir James Balfour, Paul (Edinburgh, 1907), vol. iv, pp. 57-60; Archangel Forbes is not to

in the Capuchin Order, Brother Archangel ; for John became a Capuchin a year after the death of his brother, and was given the same religious name. Their father who became the eighth Lord Forbes in the peerage of Scotland in 1593, married in 1558 Margaret Gordon, eldest daughter of the fourth Earl of Huntly. It was an unhappy marriage, embittered by a feud between the Forbes and the Huntly-Gordons over church lands which both claimed, and by divergence in religious faith ; for Forbes embraced " the new teaching," and Margaret Gordon was a staunch Catholic. The estrangement between husband and wife ended in a divorce in 1573 on the alleged ground of Margaret Gordon's light conduct ; but of that there were two opinions amongst those who knew the case. Certain it is that Forbes himself was no matrimonial saint ;[3] and the two sons as they grew into manhood sided with their mother and like her were staunch in the Faith in which they had been baptised. William, the elder son, in disgust at his father's conduct, went abroad and entered upon the profession of arms under Alessandro Farnese in the Low Countries, but in a short while he abandoned the army and became a novice in the Capuchin friary at Brussels. He lived but three years after that and died in the friary of Ghent in 1592.

It was in the following year that John, now heir to his father's property and title, made his escape from Scotland and followed in his brother's footsteps. From the time that William had become a Capuchin, the father had set himself to win over the younger son to the Calvinist faith by soft means and harsh, and finally had forced him into an engagement of marriage. John had temporised until the marriage contract was signed, waiting against the opportunity to escape the parental bonds. Now it would seem the bride to be was his willing accomplice in his escape. They mutually agreed that they were too young for the responsibilities of marriage, and that John should go abroad for a time till both should know their own minds, and that both should be free were either to make another choice in life. Thereupon

be confused with the Scottish Capuchin of romance, Archangel Leslie, concerning whom, see *infra*, p. 331.

[3] He had two natural children.

John secretly and in disguise made his way to Belgium. He landed at Noorda, and incontinently was arrested as a spy and cast into prison at Antwerp. The intervention of some Scottish friends gave him his freedom, and he was about to offer his services to the Spanish viceroy when he came upon some Capuchins and recognised in the form of their habit the figures of a dream he had had some time before, which had left an indelible impression on his mind. That meeting changed the current of his thoughts, and shortly afterwards he entered the friary at Tournay, receiving with the habit the name of Archangel, which his brother had borne. The following year came trouble from his Scottish friends in the service of Spain, who clamoured for his return to the world ; urging that his services as a soldier were required in his native country ; it was the year of a disastrous campaign. Brother Archangel was now heir to the barony to which his father had just succeeded. The case of Ange de Joyeuse, who two years before had been called from the cloister to fight for the Catholic cause in Languedoc, was alleged as indicating the duty of the future Lord Forbes. But Brother Archangel gauged the situation in Scotland more accurately than his friends ; and he was no trained soldier as was Ange de Joyeuse. Nor, perhaps, could he bring himself to fight against his father, who was a king's man. He remained a Capuchin. But the issue of the civil war brought disaster to his mother's family who fought for the queen. Margaret Gordon, reduced to beggary, joined her son in Belgium, and was granted a pension by the Spanish Court ; and for the remainder of their lives mother and son were united, Margaret dwelling near the friary in which her son resided.

In time Archangel became a preacher of some repute, but his most earnest work was among his own countrymen in the Low Countries. At Dixmude he brought back to the Church three hundred Scots soldiers in the pay of the Spanish viceroy ; at Menin he reconciled a number of Scots Calvinists. In his death, too, he was a worthy Capuchin. He was guardian of the friary of Termonde, when the plague broke out in the neighbouring town of Waastmunster. Archangel at once went there to attend to the sick ; and was himself struck down by the plague. They carried him back

to Termonde ; but solicitous for others, he ordered them to lay him in a hut in the friary garden and there he breathed out his soul into the hands of God on 2 August, 1606. His mother had died in the preceding January. Six weeks before his death Archangel had succeeded to his father's title ; at least for that time he was *de jure* the ninth Lord Forbes. He was buried with his mother and elder brother in the friary church at Ghent ; and at the urgent prayers of the bishop of Termonde and of the magistrates of Antwerp his story was written for the comfort of many who like Margaret Gordon and her sons were exiles for the Faith they held.

The Capuchin province of Belgium was, in fact, the refuge of many exiles driven from their native lands by the Protestant persecutions ; in its turn it became the nursery whence missionary friars were sent to establish the Capuchin order in territories where for many years to come the struggle for religion was to be fierce and persistent. Thus from Belgium came the Capuchin provinces in Lower Germany and the British Isles, and the mission in Holland, as we shall now relate.

(ii)

The beginnings of the Capuchin province in Lower Germany and of the missions in Great Britain and Ireland are connected with the name of that remarkable Irishman, Father Francis Nugent. It was indeed by the accident of his well-known abilities that Francis Nugent was chosen to be the leader of a new expedition into Germany ; but it was his life's ambition which made him, in spite of many difficulties, the founder of the missionary " province of Ireland " with its filiations in England and Scotland.[4]

[4] For the history of the Capuchins in Great Britain and Ireland, see Nicholas Archbold, *The Historie of the Irish Capuchins* MS. in Bibliothèque de Troyes, Cabinet des MSS., No. 1103 ; the same author's *Evangelicall Fruct of the Seraphicall Franciscan Order*, MS. in British Museum, Harl 122, d. 2, No. 3888 ; Robert Connelly : *Historia seu Annales missiones Hibernicae*, MS. in Bibl. Troyes, Cabinet des MSS. No. 706. Concerning the English mission see the interesting *Little Notes for to helpe my memory*, by Father Bernardine O'Ferall (1656-1660) MS. in Archives de l'Aulie. Transcripts of all these MSS., together with transcripts of letters concerning the mission in the Vatican archives and the Archives of Propaganda, exist in the Provincial Archives of the Capuchins in

Francis Nugent was the son of Sir Thomas Nugent of Moyrath Castle in County Meath. Forced by the penal laws to seek his education abroad, he graduated with brilliant success both at Paris and at Louvain ; yet he was but twenty-two years of age when, in 1591, he took the Capuchin habit in the friary at Brussels. Before entering the friary he had resolved, God willing, to establish the Capuchins in his native land; and one of his last acts as a layman was to put his valuable library in trust for " the future Capuchin province of Ireland." No sooner was he ordained priest in 1594 than his learning and administrative abilities made him a marked man ; he was sent to teach theology in Paris ; two years later he was called to attend the General Chapter of the Order in Rome and was appointed Commissary General for the province of Venice ; a year later he is back in Flanders and is instrumental in founding a college at Lille for exiled Irish students. He is still but twenty-eight years of age. But now begin his difficulties, difficulties which were to harass him and his chosen work throughout the greater part of his life. The cause was largely temperamental as between the Walloon Capuchins and the Irishman; nevertheless it touched upon a matter of principle which at this period was perturbing the minds of not a few of the friars elsewhere, as well as in Flanders ; namely, as to whether the Capuchin might lawfully depart from the letter of the constitutions of the Order for the sake of a wider apostolical activity—a delicate question when it comes to practice, as the history of religious Orders has constantly proved.[5] Francis Nugent was no laxist ; rather was he inclined to rigorism, as we shall see, in all that concerned the austere life of a Capuchin. On the other hand, where apostolic charity demanded a wider interpretation of the constitutions he did not hesitate to put what he considered an evangelical duty before a mere external observance. Yet, curiously enough, or perhaps not curiously, his first trouble with the intransigeant Walloons arose over his defence of the German mystic, Johannes Tauler. For this defence Francis

Dublin. The Rinuccini MSS. afford valuable information concerning the Irish Mission.

5 F. Robert Connelly, in his *Historia*, fol. 17, *seq.*, says there were two parties amongst the Walloon Capuchins, one for "the internal life," another for "the external life," and that Fr. Francis' troubles arose out of this.

Nugent was held suspect of heresy and was ordered to Rome to purge his heresy. He went to Rome, and in a public Consistory before the Pope and cardinals vindicated both Tauler and himself amidst the applause of his august audience.[6] He returned to Flanders and was elected a definitor of the province.[7] In 1608 he again attended the General Chapter of the Order in Rome ; and now came the opportunity for which he had long waited. The Duke of Lorraine, at the instance of the Scotch Capuchin, John Chrysostom—he whom we have already met in the company of the Englishman, Benet Canfield—had petitioned the Pope to send Capuchin missionaries to England. The question, it would seem, had been discussed at the Chapter, but without any decision being arrived at[8] ; whereupon Francis Nugent went direct to Paul V and laid before His Holiness the scheme of a missionary province to comprise England, Ireland and Scotland. His eloquent pleading won the Pope's assent, and on May 29 a brief was issued instituting a Capuchin mission for "England, Scotland and Ireland and all adjacent islands"; at the same time granting the missionaries all apostolic faculties enjoyed by other religious missionaries and seminary priests in those lands. A clause was added dispensing missionaries from wearing the habit of the Order whilst engaged on their missionary labours.[9]

Francis Nugent was now commissioned by the Chapter to organise the mission, and for this purpose was offered a friary at Friburg in Switzerland to be the nursery and training camp of the missionaries ; but this he refused as being at too great a distance from the Irish colleges in the Low Countries, from which he hoped to raise recruits. He returned to Flanders to prepare the way for the work appointed him, and in 1611 we find him guardian of the friary at Douai, and with his first recruits ready to be received to the Capuchin habit for work on the new mission: though the task of recruiting from the colleges had not been

[6] According to Robert Connelly, the dispute concerned Tauler's sermon, "*De paupertate spiritus.*" So also Nicholas Archbold : *Historie of the Irish Capucins*. *Vide* Joh. Thauleri *Cantica* in *Opera Omnia* (ed. Laurentius Surius—Coloniae, 1548), Cant. VI, *De vera paupertate et nuditate spiritus*, p. xcviii.

[7] In the Capuchin Order, the definitors, together with the Provincial, are the governing council of the province.

[8] Nicholas Archbold, *Histoire*, fol. 1, and *Evangelicall Fruct*, fol. 49.

[9] *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, V, p. 278.

easy, owing to the opposition of other religious orders who were already in the field.[10]

At that moment it was that Francis Nugent was commissioned by the General of the Order to choose a company of friars and with them to found a Capuchin settlement on the Rhine. It is evident that the mission in Great Britain and Ireland was not yet taken very seriously by the higher authorities. There was in fact a distinct prejudice against undertaking missions which involved such departures from the common life as the wearing of the secular dress and the handling of money.

Francis Nugent went to Germany, and at Cologne laid the foundation of what were to become two flourishing provinces on the Rhine; but he had no thought of allowing the German mission to interfere with his project of an Anglo-Irish mission. Rather it would seem that in undertaking his new commission he proposed to himself to transfer the training ground of the Irish, English and Scotch missionaries from Douai to Cologne; and in fact it was at Cologne that the first Irish recruits were received into the Capuchin Order. But again difficulties arose. The Roman superiors did not see eye to eye with him in regard to certain innovations which he considered the religious condition of the country demanded; and the Germans accused him of thinking more of the Anglo-Irish mission than of the interests of religion in Germany. So after two years he was relieved of his superiorship in Germany, and with his Irish recruits returned to Belgium. There he was given as a seminary of the Anglo-Irish mission a newly-built friary at Charleville; and at Charleville he remained until his death in 1635, directing the work of the mission and training the missionaries. This mission was the one earthly thing he lived for. When in 1624 on the death of Peter Lombard, Archbishop of Armagh, it was proposed that he should succeed to that see, he persistently refused the honour, saying that "his little mission of the Capuchins into Ireland was more choice unto him than the primacy of all Ireland."[11] True, owing in a measure to the continued opposition of the Walloon Capuchins, perhaps, too, to a certain lack of personal magnetism,[12] he was unable to carry

[10] Nicholas Archbold: *Historie*, fol. 30. [11] *Ibid.*, fol. 7.

[12] He seems to have lacked the sympathetic understanding of character needful to the born leader. cf. N. Archbold: *Historie*, fol. 4, and fol. 28, *seq.*

out the full scheme of establishing three distinct seminary-friaries for the missions in England, Ireland, and Scotland.[13] However, as we shall see, his plan for a native Capuchin mission in England was crossed by the diplomacy of that masterful French Capuchin, Père Joseph. Nevertheless it was mainly due to the indomitable courage of Francis Nugent that the Capuchins took their place in Great Britain and Ireland amongst the religious Orders who laboured, suffered and endured for the sake of the Catholic Faith during the penal days.

(iii)

Although the Capuchin mission for Great Britain and Ireland was decreed by Paul V in 1608, it was not until 1615 that Francis Nugent sent out his first missionaries. This was partly due to the circumstances already related, but in part also to Francis Nugent's determined policy that no missionary should be sent to the mission field until he had been especially trained for the work before him and well moulded in the life of a Capuchin friar. So thorough was the theological training that Francis Nugent employed the Jew Abraham to teach Hebrew so that the missionaries should be the better grounded in the knowledge of the Scriptures; he himself was not only a theologian of wide repute but also a Greek classicist. Yet more severe was the ascetical and religious training; too severe some thought, but the Charleville missionaries were to be trained to endure any hardship the hunted life of a missionary should entail and to be prepared for the special temptations which the missionary must face. Theirs was not to be the sheltered life of the cloister.

Not all who came to the Charleville friary were allowed to pass on to the mission-field.[14] But in 1615 five friars were sent to Ireland under the leadership of Father Stephen Daly, a man of singular prudence as was attested by David Rothe, Bishop of Ossory, who during Stephen Daly's brief

[13] *Arch. Prop. Fide, I. Anglia*, vol. 34, fol. 151.

[14] So runs Norbert Arnoldus in his *Historia*, fol. 3. Stephen Daly went first to prepare the way; four others followed somewhat later. In his *Evangelicall Feast*, fol. 86, Arnould gives the date of the arrival in Ireland of the first Capuchins as 1618.

missionary career (he died in 1620) would attempt nothing without his counsel.[15] At first the missionaries lived as best they might, scattered throughout the country ; but in 1524 Francis Nugent, during a visitation of the mission, obtained for them a friary in Dublin ; and in Dublin the Capuchins have kept a continuous settlement from that day to this. There were times when they were hunted out or cast into gaol, when the anti-Papal policy of the Irish government demanded a demonstration ; yet they returned when the immediate trouble was over. Father Nugent lived to see Capuchin friaries established in Slane, Limerick, Molingar, and Drogheda : before the end of the century there were fourteen friaries in Ireland.[16] We speak of " friaries "; they were small insignificant dwellings, tucked away mostly in some inconspicuous street or lane. From them the friars went forth on apostolic journeys to minister, secretly or publicly according to circumstances, to the suffering Catholics. Writing of Father Columb Glin—one of the first missionaries—the old chronicler, his fellow labourer, relates : " he preached often and that ordinarily in mountains, woods, thickets and valleys partly for greater security, partly to be less burdensome to the people. He preached two or three times a day on Sundays and festivals and the people came flocking to him. When visiting a house he would catechise the domestics whilst they prepared supper : oftentimes he spent the whole day hearing confessions until midnight."[17] For many years the Capuchin mission in Ireland was hampered by the opposition of certain of the religious Orders and the regular bishops ; the Capuchins' most ardent friends were to be found amongst the secular clergy and the laity.[18] In Ireland, too, as elsewhere the

[15] Nicholas Archbold : *Evangelicall Fruct*, fol. 87.

[16] cf. *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, V, p. 412.

[17] Nicholas Archbold, *Evangelicall Fruct*, fol. 249-250.

[18] e.g. in 1644 Scarampi wrote to Cardinal Barbarini, advising that the Capuchins in Ireland be gathered into two convents with regular observance owing to the hostility towards them of certain prelates and religious orders.—Bibl. Vaticana, MSS., Barbarini, No. 8626, fol. 45. Archbishop Fleming, a Recollect Franciscan, at first strenuously opposed the introduction of the Capuchins into Dublin. Later he became more favourable to them (cf. *Bullar. Ord. Cap.* V, p. 273). On the other hand, Thomas Dease, Bishop of Meath, and David Rothe, Bishop of Ossory, were their fast friends (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 272-274). Dease, when professor in the Irish college at Paris in 1618, had written pleading letters to Francis Nugent, begging that Capuchins be sent

Capuchins seem to have met with less hostility from the Protestants than did other religious orders. During the Parliamentary War in 1642, Father Anthony Nugent went freely between Dublin and Drogheda " being in favour with Catholics and Protestants " and in Drogheda he lodged in the house of the brother of Lord Moore of Mellifont, who though a Protestant kept a Capuchin habit by him to put on in case the Catholics took Drogheda.[19] Nevertheless the story of the Irish Capuchins throughout the seventeenth century is a story of hardship and suffering for the Faith they loved ; a story of quiet persistent endurance and of the daily task. They shared the life of the people whom they served, both for sorrow and for joy ; though their sorrows were of this world and their joys in the Faith which neither political tyranny nor religious persecution could subdue. Theirs was not the opportunity to figure in the larger problems which mould the world at large. Their heart and their service was with the people of their own land and their glory is the common glory of their people's Faith which the direst oppression could not quench.

So too, the missionary labours of the Capuchins in Scotland might have passed unrecognised save by the people amongst whom they worked, had it not been for a literary romance which made the name of Archangel Leslie " the Scotch Capuchin " known throughout Europe. Gian-Battista Rinuccini, Archbishop of Fermo and at one time Papal delegate in Ireland, the original author of the legend, professed to tell "a true story" ; and believed that he was telling it. He gathered the material of his book from personal interviews with Archangel Leslie, from the archives of the Capuchin Order, and from stories he had heard from the Capuchins of Monte-Giorgio in the diocese of Fermo with whom Archangel Leslie had sojourned during a stay in Italy. The book, therefore, at first sight seems well authenticated ; which in fact it is not. The most probable explanation is that both Rinuccini and the Italian Capuchins

to the Highlands of Scotland to minister to the Catholics. (*Vide* Connelly : *Historia Missionis Hiberniae*, fol. 182-191. Dease's letters are illuminating as to the condition of the Highland Catholics). See also the letter of O'Neill to Fr. Nugent, offering to supply the Capuchin missionaries to Ireland with vestments and other necessaries. Connelly : *Historia*, fol. 192.

[19] Nicholas Archbold : *Historie*, fol. 9.

confused with the story Archangel Leslie told them of his own life the stories he related of other Scotch Capuchins, notably of that other Father Archangel, juridically the ninth Baron Forbes. Rinuccini made "the Scotch Capuchin" a hero of romance in many countries—much to the charigin of some of Archangel Leslie's own compatriots.[20]

Archangel Leslie's story as we read it in authentic documents is indeed not without heroic quality: but his was the heroism common to many who in those days became exiles from their own land for the Faith they held, and then eventually returned as missionaries at the peril of their lives to serve their people.

George Leslie (he assumed the name of Archangel when he became a Capuchin) was the son of James Leslie of Peterstone and his wife Jean Wood, and was a native of Aberdeen.[21] Having become reconciled to the Catholic Church, he went abroad and was entered as a student in the Scots' college in Rome; but shortly afterwards sought admission amongst the Capuchins and was sent to make his novitiate in the Marches of Ancona. We next hear of him at Bologna in 1617 when he wrote to Cardinal Maffeo Barbarini requesting faculties to hear the confessions of the English, Irish and Scot residents in that city and to absolve

[20] G. B. Rinuccini: *Il Cappuccini Scozzese* (Fermo, 1644). The Italian original went through nine editions in thirty years. In 1659 it was translated into Spanish, and into Portuguese in 1667. In 1664 appeared *Le Capucin Escossois: Histoire merveilleuse et très véritable arrivée de notre temps*, by P. Francois Barrault. It was published at Rouen professedly as a translation of the original Italian of Rinuccini, but Barrault in fact amplified the narrative and made confusion worse confounded. In the eighteenth century Rinuccini's work was again published by Timoteo da Brescia (Brescia, 1736) with additions taken from Barrault and the Portuguese version; and went through several editions. A Flemish version of Barrault's translation was published at Bruges in 1687 and went through several editions. A German translation appeared at Constanz (Switzerland) in 1677 and again at Bregenz in 1711. *Vide* P. Frédégand Callaey: *Essai Critique sur la Vie du P. Archange Leslie* (Paris-Couvin, 1914). The author makes scholarly use of the letters of Archangel Leslie to Card. Maffeo Barbarini preserved in the Vatican Library, *fonds Barbarini latin*, 8628. Even in recent years the book has evoked much unfavourable criticism; but the charge suggested by T. G. Law in *The Scottish Review*, July, 1891, that Archangel was a vain boaster. is manifestly unjust. As P. Frédégand Callaey points out (op. cit., p. 34), Rinuccini expressly declares that he did not scrupulously report Father Archangel's own words; and there are Father Archangel's own letters to prove what manner of man he was: "*un homme de sacrifice, franc et loyal.*"

[21] In the Student's Register of the Scots' College, Rome (ad annum 1608), his name is entered as *Georgius Lesly Aberdonensis.*

converts from heresy. It is evident from his letters to the Cardinal both now and later, that Father Archangel was much concerned about the position in which the exiled Catholics in Italy found themselves. Outside Rome and Loretto no provision was made for the English-speaking peoples to receive instruction and go to confession. Difficulties too, were put in the way of English-speaking Protestants who wished to be reconciled to the Church. Father Archangel asks for ample faculties to deal with such cases. Moreover, he complains that his efforts to be of use to his fellow countrymen and the English and Irish living in Bologna, have brought him under a suspicion of heresy on the part of his Capuchin brethren, who evidently regarded all English-speaking people as heretics at heart if not by profession ! Nor was it only the Italian Capuchins who took that view. In a letter written to the cardinal in 1618 from Monte La Verna he indignantly complains of the unhappy experience of his cousin, Thomas Dempster, the historian of the Scottish Church.[22] "Driven from England as a papist, he finds himself treated as a heretic in Italy."

Having received the requested faculties, Archangel seems to have spent the next five years in Bologna, ministering to his suffering compatriots.

In 1623 he was granted permission by the Minister General to go as a missionary to Scotland. He crossed to London in the suite of the Marquis de la Hinojasa, Ambassador-Extraordinary to the Court of James I.[23] Thence he wrote to Cardinal Maffeo Barbarini announcing his arrival. He informs the cardinal that the king and the English Council have agreed to grant toleration to Catholics on the occasion of the marriage of the Prince of Wales to the Spanish Infanta ; but that the toleration will not apply to Scotland. Those who are negotiating the marriage, he says, either do not realise the state of affairs in Scotland or have not the will to urge a remedy. He has sought in vain to find succour in men; now he can but trust in the goodness of

[22] He was the author of *Historia ecclesiastica Gentis Scotorum* published at Bologna in 1627. cf. *The Catholic Encyclopaedia* (New York, 1908), vol. iv., p. 717.

[23] According to the Rinuccini-Barrault story, Archangel spent some time in Paris and preached before the Court. Is there some confusion here with the famous preacher, Father Archangel de Pembroke of the Paris Capuchin community ?

God. He is about to go to Scotland where he will be the guest of Baron Herries and the house of Maxwell.[24] For six years Archangel Leslie laboured zealously in the Lowlands of Scotland, mainly it would seem in Aberdeenshire. He not only ministered to the Catholics ; he was ardent to make converts amongst the Protestants. A pamphlet he published in 1624, entitled : *Where was your church before Luther*, evoked a spirited reply from Andrew Logie, Archdeacon of Aberdeen.[25] That his labours met with some success is evident from the list of names, well known in Scottish history, of those reconciled to the Catholic Faith, which appears in a letter he wrote in 1630 to his relative Colonel Semphill, then living in Spain.[26]

It was doubtless the reaction in favour of Catholicism which became apparent amongst the Scottish gentry at this time which brought about a recrudescence of ferocious hostility towards the Catholics on the part of the ministers and led to a more severe application of the penal laws. On December 2, 1628, the privy council ordered the arrest " of the Capuchin Leslie, commonly called Archangel."[27] He escaped by going into hiding : for more than a year he could only minister to the spiritual needs of the Catholics in secret.

Then in 1630 happened one of those occurrences which brought bitterness into the life of not a few of the missionaries of those days. Archangel Leslie was cited by the Congregation of Propaganda to answer charges made against him by some of his fellow clergy. Protests in his favour were at once sent to the Congregation both by many of the laity and by his superiors. His examination before the cardinals ended in an honourable acquittal and in a letter from Propaganda to the General of the Order lauding his work and probity of life, and recommending that he should be sent back to continue his work in Scotland.[28] But for some reason Archangel lingered on in Italy and was appointed guardian of the friary

[24] cf. P. Frédégand Callaey, op. cit., pp. 35-36, where the letter is given in full.

[25] Andrew Logie : *Cum Deo bono. Rane from the clouds upon a choicke Angel, or a returned answer to that common quaeritur of our adversaries : Where was your church before Luther* (Aberdeen 1624).

[26] cf. P. Frédégand Callaey, op. cit., p. 28.

[27] *The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland*, ed. Hume Brown, 2 series, vol. ii, p. 497 (Edinburgh, 1900).

[28] *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, VII, p. 331.

of Monte-Giorgio in the Marches of Ancona. It was at this period that he made the acquaintance of Archbishop Rinuccini. He returned to Scotland in 1634, armed with new privileges for the Capuchin missionaries in Scotland.[29] All we know of his further career is that he lived in great poverty and that he died, probably in 1637, in his mother's house " near the mill of Aboyne " by the river Dee. He was buried in a ruined church between the mill and Kanakyle or Hunthall.[30]

Archangel Leslie's fame was posthumous ; he had been dead about seven years when Rinuccini wrote his book.

But other Capuchins had preceded Archangel Leslie on the Scottish mission. In 1618 a Scottish laird, James Maitland[31] and MacDonald, head of the clan Ranald, wrote to Father Francis Nugent, pleading that Capuchin missionaries should be sent to minister to the needs of the Catholics in Scotland.[32] Several Capuchins were consequently sent, amongst them Father Epiphanius Lindsay who arrived in 1620.[33] Epiphanius Lindsay is perhaps the most venerable

[29] *ibid.*

[30] So says Fr. W. Christie, S.J., in his letter written in 1653 to Fr. Gordon, rector of the Scots' College in Rome. The letter was written as a protest against the Rinuccini story. Fr. Christie's indignation at the dissemination of this book probably accounts for what P. Frédégand Callaey considers his ungenerous references to a fellow missionary (op. cit., p. 33).

[31] He was the son of William Maitland, " Secretary Lethington." He married Agnes Maxwell, daughter of the fifth Lord Herries. In 1613 James Maitland was forced to migrate to the Low Countries on account of his religion. cf. Sir J. Balfour, par. 1, *The Scots' Peerage*, vol. v, pp. 295-296.

[32] *Vide* R. Connelly : *Historia*, fol. 193-196, where the letters are given in full. Maitland urges that Gaelic-speaking Irishmen should be sent to the Highlands. MacDonald mentions amongst other reasons for the suggested mission, that the Capuchins are held in esteem at the court of James I. "Ipse etiam rex Jacobus et qui Regi sunt a sanctioribus consiliis Capucinorum Ordinem in maximo pretio constituunt."

It will be remembered that Fra Giacinto da Casale had relations with James I concerning the affair of the Elector-Palatine (*supra*, p. 303). About the same time Father Francis Nugent discussed the affair with the agent of the King in Brussels. Nugent's proposal was that the Elector-Palatine's children should be educated as Catholics and succeed to the electorate ; but this was rejected. The King, however, gave Nugent a safe conduct to come to England. (N. Archbold: *Historie*, fol. 38. Archbold speaks of a Father Alexande de Ligny as a friend of Nugent in connexion with this affair. Is he the Alexander d'Ales mentioned in the correspondence of Giacinto da Casale and who visited the English court ?) According to Archbold : *Evangelicall Fruct*, fol. 7, Charles I, when Prince of Wales, gave the Capuchin Zaccaria Boverio leave to visit England whenever he pleased and to remain there without disturbance.

[33] *Vide* P. Cyprien de Gamaches : *Mémoires de la Mission des Capucins . . . près la Reine d'Angleterre* edit. Paris, 1881, p. 347, when he says : *Quo tempore*

figure in the story of the Scotch Capuchins.[34] His French biographer says "he was of the most noble and ancient family of Lindsay."[35] Having finished his studies at the Jesuit college of Louvain, he entered the priesthood and spent some years as a secular priest in Scotland until he was arrested and expelled the country. He returned to Flanders; made the acquaintance of the Capuchins, joined their Order and eventually received permission to go back to the Scottish mission. On his return to Scotland he was first employed as chaplain to one of the Catholic families: but that life seemed too easy to him; he yearned to go forth and work amongst the scattered poor. So forth he went disguised as a shepherd; and for thirty years he spent his life traversing all parts of Scotland to search out and minister to the poor Catholics. As a true friar he shared their life of poverty; for many years he fasted rigorously all the year round, taking but one meal daily and that in the evening, till his Jesuit confessor Father Clerc warned him to moderate his austerity; but to the end his food was the food of the poor amongst whom he lived. Usually he dwelt alone and apart, lest in case of arrest he should draw others into trouble. On his journeys he carried a bagpipe which he played at fairs and other gatherings where he was likely to become acquainted with poor Catholics. Three times he was betrayed by false friends; but each time escaped. The first time (as he relates in a letter to a French Capuchin)[36] he was sold to the Earl of Dunbar for a suit of clothes and a hundred

tres tantum sacerdotes in toto regno mihi noti erant. Francis Nugent in his report to Propaganda in 1622 writes that he had sent two missionaries to Scotland: Epiphanius Lindsay seems to have been sent by the General and not from Charleville. His name is not found amongst the friars of that house. Not improbably Fr. John Chrysostom, mentioned in MacDonald's letter to Nugent, was already in Scotland. For an account of Father John Chrysostom *vide* Cyprien de Gamaches, op. cit., pp. 320-329.

[34] See the account of his life and death given by Cyprien de Gamaches, op. cit. pp. 332-354.

[35] Père Cyprien adds: *Il était comte de Maine et sa mere fille d' autre comte.* The details of Epiphanius' life were supplied to him by the Jesuit Fr. Clerc, who had been the Friar's confessor and friend for many years. But Scotch titles and family connexions were always a puzzle to foreigners. Father Epiphanius was probably of the Lindsays of Vain or Vayne. Alexander Lindsay of Vayne, who died in 1527, was the second son of Sir David Lindsay of Edzell, the "founder" of the Balcarres house. cf. Lord Lindsay: *Lives of the Lindsays* (Wigan, 1840), vol. i, p. 318.

[36] Cyprien de Gamaches, cf. *Mémoires*, p. 350.

Scots marks ; but a Catholic nobleman warned him of his danger. The second time he was sold for one hundred marks to Thomas Ramsay, a minister, who went with his agents to arrest him whilst he was saying mass in the house of a Catholic. But Epiphanius, warned, had anticipated the hour at which mass should have been said. He was pursued to the hills, where he lay hiding in a bush, whilst the baffled minister within earshot discussed further plans for his capture. The third time he was sold to one of his own blood-relations but again was warned and escaped. He was in his eighty-fourth year when his end came. At the last he was attended by his friend Father Clerc, into whose hands he delivered his books and the few things he had, that he might die in utter poverty after the manner of St. Francis. Epiphanius Lindsay was of the breed of missionary who dares all and sacrifices all for pure love of his neighbour.

Meanwhile the Capuchins had spread to England. The first who came, were sent from Paris, not from Charleville. They were Benet Canfield and John Chrysostom the Scot—they whom we met in the Paris friary with Ange de Joyeuse. Their adventure into England we have related elsewhere.[37] That was in 1599. In 1618 an English Capuchin, Father Angelus Pamel of the Capuchin province of Paris, was thrown into gaol in London in the uprising against the Catholics which followed the gunpowder plot. Angelus Pamel was of a family that had suffered for the Faith. His widowed mother had been reduced to poverty by fines inflicted on her for harbouring priests.[38] He remained in prison until the death of James I, when he was released at the petition of the French king and expelled the kingdom. But he returned to England after a six months sojourn in Paris, together with Père Archange de Pembroke, one of the notable English Capuchins of the Paris province, and worked as a missionary in London until the coming of the French Capuchins as chaplains to Henrietta, Queen of Charles I. About the same time that Angelus Pamel was first working on the English mission, two French Capuchins attached as chaplains to the French embassy,

[37] *Supra.*

[38] See the biographical notice : *Père Ange de Londres*, in *Eloges historiques des Capucins de la province de Paris*, op. cit.

had made a number of converts, amongst them the Duchess of Lennox, and were in favour with the king ; they were Père Ange de Raconis, himself a converted Huguenot, and Père Archange de Luynes a relative of the duc de Luynes.[39] It may have been due to this that in 1617 Lord Montague of Cowdray wrote to Archange de Pembroke urging that more Capuchin missionaries be sent to England.[40] Père Archange sent the letter to Francis Nugent, and three missionaries from Flanders shortly afterwards arrived in London. Their arrival was too much for the Protestant party and a broadsheet was published and circulated with the title : "A Newe Secte of Friars called Capichine." It ran :

> These newe freshecome Friars being sprong up of late,
> doe nowe within Andwarpe keepe their abidinge :
> Seducinge muche people to their damned estate
> by their new false founde doctrine the Gospel deridinge.
> Sayinge and affirminge, which is no newe false tidinge:
> That all suche as doe the Pope's doctrine despise,
> As damned soules to hell must be ridinge.
> For they doe condemne them with their newe found lie,
> these be the children of the worlde counted wise,
> whose wisedome is folly to God and his elect.
> But let Sathan worke all that he can devise,
> God it is alone which the Gospel doeth protect.[41]

From that time the Capuchins were definitely established in England, and remained there until the continental nurseries of the Anglo-Irish province were suppressed at the time of the French Revolution.[42]

In 1630, however, occurred an event which retarded the development of the English Capuchin mission, and for a time caused no little confusion amongst the missionaries. That was the establishment of French Capuchins at Somerset

[39] Cyprien de Gamaches, op. cit., pp. 317-318.

[40] In this letter Lord Montague speaks of the devotedness and zeal of the Capuchins and of the effect of their austere life on the people. See the letter in R. Connelly, *Historia*, fol. 170-173.

[41] *Vide* British Museum collection of ballads, Huth, 50 (1-76). The broadsheet is erroneously dated "*circa* 1580" in the Catalogue.

[42] They returned to England in 1850.

House as official chaplains to the queen. Viewed from the standpoint of the spiritual interests of the English Catholics, it was one of the diplomatic blunders of Père Joseph du Tremblay. Had he been content to regard the royal chaplaincy merely as a royal chaplaincy, no harm would have been done ; but the imagination of Père Joseph was fired with a wider scheme ; the royal chaplaincy was to be the beginning of "a mission" for the conversion of England ; and England and Scotland were annexed to the world-wide mission-field over which the Commissary of the French missions, in virtue of faculties granted by the Congregation of Propaganda, had direct authority independent of the Minister General of the Order. That meant the breaking up of the Capuchin mission of Great Britain and Ireland as instituted by Paul V. Moreover, to facilitate the work of the chaplains, it had been agreed between Père Joseph and the French Court that all friars, " natives of the kingdom," should be withdrawn from England and Scotland ; and an order to that effect was issued. The order created consternation amongst the Capuchins working in Great Britain. The Irish Capuchins in the country refused to leave, on the ground that they were not " natives of the kingdom " ; the English and Scotch Capuchins, with the exception of the venerable Epiphanius Lindsay, were forced to return to their friaries on the Continent. Archangel Leslie probably voiced the general feeling of the " native " Capuchins in his pungent reference to Père Joseph du Tremblay on this occasion.[43] An appeal to Propaganda enabled some of the "natives" to return.[44] But the restrictions imposed by the presence of the chaplains at the Court undoubtedly arrested the progress of the mission. Numbers of English Capuchins were to be found abroad who under other circumstances would have swelled the ranks of the missionaries.[45]

Of the zeal and energy of the French chaplains, within the limited sphere in which they were free to work, there can

[43] See his letter to Colonel Semphill in P. Frédégand Callaey, op. cit., p. 30.

[44] Thus in January, 1634, Fathers Anselm and Richard, both Englishmen, received permission to return first to Scotland and then to England. *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, VII, p. 332. Archangel Leslie himself returned to Scotland the same year.

[45] *Vide* Cyprian de Gamaches, op. cit., where many interesting details are given. Père Cyprian was a member of the chaplaincy and for a time the superior.

be no question. They effected a number of conversions in court circles; and during the bitter persecution of the Catholics in the Puritan uprising which accompanied the civil war, many of them at the peril of their own lives succoured the imprisoned Catholics and ministered to those condemned to death. At the outbreak of the civil war, when the queen went to Holland to seek supplies for the royal cause, the chapel at Somerset House was closed by order of Parliament, and the Capuchins imprisoned in their own lodging. On several occasions the agents of the Parliament broke into the house and the intervention of the French ambassador was needed to save them from personal violence. They returned to Somerset House at the restoration of Charles II. During the Plague of London, two of them died at their post of duty. The chaplaincy ceased with the death of Queen Henriette Marie.

With the withdrawal of the French chaplaincy the number of Capuchin missionaries in England increased; in the eighteenth century they were grouped into district communities under local guardians, and the mission was governed by a Vicar Provincial appointed by the Definitory of the newly-erected Irish province. But with that later development this book is not concerned.[46]

(iv)

We return now to the formation of Capuchin settlements in Lower Germany.[47]

The mission and eventual formation of a Capuchin province on the Rhine was due to the initiative of Sweikard, Archbishop and Elector of Mainz. In 1608 he wrote to the

[46] In 1656 the Capuchins of Normandy petitioned Propaganda to allow them to form "a mission" in England, but the petition was refused. cf. Bernardine O'Ferall, MS., cit., pp. 2-3.

[47] For the history of the Capuchins in the Rhine provinces, see Hierotheus Confluentinus: *Historia Provinciae Rhenanae*. Mainz, 1735-1750. P. Hierotheus does less than justice to Francis Nugent's work in Cologne. cf. Vol. I, p. 247 *seq.* But it would seem that many of the Germans resented Nugent's proposal to make Cologne the nursery of the Anglo-Irish mission. They considered evidently that the Capuchins had been invited to Lower Germany to serve the Catholic interests in those parts and not to establish a "foreign mission." *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, p. 278, *seq.*

General of the Order, Girolamo da Castel-Ferretti, asking that four or five friars, priests and lay-brothers, be sent to Mainz to assist him in the work of the sacred ministry. They must be Germans, and "able to stand both the climate and the men."[48]

For reasons which are not clear, no immediate reply was sent to this request; and when eventually in 1611, after reiterated appeals from the Archbishop Elector, a company of Capuchins was sent to establish a house in Mainz, they were mainly a mixed body of Irish and Belgians under the leadership of the Irishman, Francis Nugent. Here they met with difficulties on the part of the Chapter of the diocese; for in the meantime the Archbishop had installed in the city a body of Observant Franciscans and the Chapter was not in favour of another community. News of this opposition was brought to Francis Nugent on his arrival at Cologne, and in consequence the Papal nuncio, Albergati, advised him to make a settlement in that city. Here too, the Chapter at first objected; already, they urged, the city possessed too many religious houses. However, after awhile one of the leading citizens was won over to their side by the poverty and austerity of their life, and himself provided a house for them, with the temporary use of the church of St. Maternus. Very soon the citizens came flocking to the church to hear the sermons, attracted as much by the life of the friars as by their words. Francis Nugent himself preached in French, yet the church was crowded whenever he preached, "because of his personality."[49] And then there was Constantine de Barbançon, a master-mystic and wonderful director of souls, whose sanctity was to cast a halo around the Cologne friary.[50] As we have said, Francis Nugent remained in Cologne but two years: yet the confraternity of our Lord's Passion which he instituted with the co-operation of the nuncio, Albergati, remained for many years a testimony to his zeal and sagacity. The confraternity was in some sort a Converts' Aid Society whilst at the same time it filled the function of a medieval Third Order in that its members were bound by statutes which regulated their own lives with a

[48] *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, loc. cit., p. 325-6.
[49] Nicholas Archbold, *Evangelicall Fruct*, fol. 77, *seq.*
[50] cf. *infra*, chapter xiv.

view to personal sanctification. Thus they must hear mass daily, and on certain days meet in the church of the Capuchins for spiritual conferences and religious exercises. They must live purely, avoid blasphemous oaths and gaming, and abstain from drunken bouts ; they must exercise the spiritual and corporal works of mercy ; they must, too, be zealous for the dignity of divine worship. In a word they were to be examples of the Faith they purposed to teach to others according to the adage, "it is a disgrace to the teacher when his own fault accuses him." For the particular purpose of the confraternity was to assist those who were desirous of being reconciled to the Catholic Church, spiritually as well as temporarily.

The nuncio in an open letter declared the need of such a confraternity. Many there were, especially amongst the lesser nobility and public officials and the predicants, who were convinced of the truth of the Catholic Faith and anxious to be reconciled to the Church, but were held back by the certainty that if they became Catholics they would lose the position they held by favour of the Protestant princes and others in authority, and whose wives and children would in consequence be brought to starvation. To assist these was an obligation of Christian charity. It would be urged, he wrote, that the confraternity might be an inducement for some to become Catholics for the sake of the loaves and fishes ; but if one were to be held back from doing a good work on the ground that some might abuse it, no good work would ever be done.[51]

The confraternity was established, and numbered amongst its members many of the higher nobility and leading citizens. Before long many of the Catholic princes and bishops became affiliated to it. In 1616 Paul V gave it his solemn approval and promulgated the statutes by which it was to be governed. Already in 1612 the General of the Capuchins had blessed the project and had admitted the members to a participation in the spiritual benefits of the Order. By the statutes the confraternity was formally placed under the spiritual direction of the Capuchins, though it was to be governed by its own provost and his counsellors. The rules laid down in regard to the converts showed a large wisdom. Those who

[51] cf. *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, pp. 283-284.

expressed a desire to be reconciled to the Church were to be carefully examined as to their motive and reasons : no one was to be admitted of whose sincerity there was any doubt, nor to be given any pecuniary assistance. After their reception into the Church the confraternity must above all assist them spiritually by religious instruction and encouragement. It must in fact fulfil the part of the godparents in watching over the religious advancement of the neophyte. Any convert who, after his reception into the Church, showed himself indifferent in the practice of religion, or whose life was a scandal to the Faith, was to be deprived of temporal assistance. The alms given for the aid of the converts were to be scrupulously administered for that purpose ; and it was forbidden under pain of excommunication to use the funds of the confraternity for the purpose of providing dinners or social feasts for the members of the confraternity ; even if gifts were offered for this purpose they must be refused. In giving assistance to the converts, regard must be had for their station in life.[52] Those converts who show capacity are to be allowed to work for the conversion of souls " by preaching, catechising or writing books, each according to his vocation and the grace given him by God."

The confraternity rapidly obtained general approval : popes, emperors and kings came to regard it as a distinction to be admitted honorary members.[53] Many of the converts, through the assistance given by the confraternity, were within a few years from its inception to be found employed in the public service and in the learned professions ; not a few entered the clerical and religious orders. It evidently met a need.[54]

The year following the arrival of the Capuchins in Cologne, they were invited to settle in Paderborn. In 1614 they were received at Aachen, Essen and at Münster in Westphalia, and the next year in Trier.[55] The nuncio,

[52] *Vide* brief of Paul V, *Pias Christi fidelium*, in *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, pp. 293-307.

[53] *Vide Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, p. 291.

[54] The registers of the confraternity from the year 1641 to 1745 show that eleven thousand seven hundred and five converts had been provided for ; and thirty-eight apostate religious had by its means returned to their Orders : *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, p. 292.

[55] *Bullar. Ord. Cap., IV*, p. 329. cf. p 383.

Albergati, was active in recommending them to the bishops. By 1618 they were established in Dusseldorf and Bonn and that same year the Chapter of Mainz consented to receive them. Before the end of the century there were fifty-four friaries in Lower Germany divided into two provinces—the province of Cologne and the province of the Rhine with its centre at Mainz. Besides the friaries there were a number of missionary residences set in the midst of Protestant districts, particularly in Hanover. From these residences the friars went out to evangelise the countryside, tramping the country to succour the scattered Catholics.

In the Rhine province, as elsewhere in Germany, the Capuchins won the respect of many Protestants, as well as of the Catholics ; and during the Thirty Years' War were frequently protected by the Protestant leaders. When in 1626 the Bishop of Halberstadt took Paderborn after a stubborn defence led by a Capuchin lay-brother, he not only allowed the friars to say mass and to preach publicly, but gave them a generous alms. " If all monks were like these," he is reported to have said, " we might well be with them."[56]

Later, when the Swedes overran Germany, both at Mainz and Frankfort the Duke of Oxenstern took the Capuchins under his special protection and allowed them to remain in their friaries, though they had refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Swedish crown.[57]

(v)

In the meantime in Belgium the Capuchins had continued to increase in numbers and in influence. They were popular with the people and they were allied with the governing class by the number of recruits who came to them from the nobility. The most notable of these was Prince Antoine d'Aremberg, of one of the proudest houses in Europe as it was said, who became a Capuchin in 1616 and was henceforth

[56]cf. N. Archbold, *Evangelicall Fruct*, MS. cit., fol 163-166. Archbold had been received into the Capuchin Order at Cologne.

[57]Hierotheus Confluentinus, op. cit., I, pp. 304-305.

known as Frère Charles.[58] He was followed by his younger brother Eugène and several of his relatives. In whatever position in life an d'Aremberg would find himself, if he had any distinction of character at all, he must have played a notable part in Belgium at that period. And Frère Charles was a man of decision and versatility, though withal a sincere and humble religious. He needed decision to become a Capuchin in spite of the opposition of his mother, the masterful Anne de Croy. Anne with her husband, Prince Charles, had founded a friary of Capuchins at Enghien. Having founded the friary, she wished to rule it ; that and the flight of her two sons to the Order, against her will, created a situation which for some time engaged the Papal diplomats in Rome and Brussels. But in Frère Charles she had to deal with a character as masterful as her own ; and in the end she capitulated with a good grace. Charles d'Aremberg was above all things a man of affairs, energetic and tactful ; and in the various offices he held, as guardian, provincial and Definitor General he contributed much to the building up of the Belgian province. He wielded, too, a ready pen which he used at times to defend the interests of the Order ; it was a period when every body of men of any influence had need to stand on the defensive as much against their natural allies as against their professed enemies; and Charles d'Aremberg had a gift for incisive retort.[59] Of his deep and sincere piety there can be no question ; of this he has left a witness in his compilation of the " lives " of the early Capuchins, written for the edification of his religious brethren ;[60] and his personal life was marked by a sweet humility and thoughtfulness for others which won him a general affection. But his family connexions brought him much into the public eye. In the conspiracy of the Nobles against the repressive rule of Roose, the governor-general, in 1633, the d'Arembergs were singled out by the Spanish court —unjustly it was later proved—as the instigators of a conspi-

[58] cf. P. Frédégand d'Anvers : *Etude sur le Père Charles d'Aremberg* (Paris, Rome, 1919).

[59] These polemical writings, however, were never published. cf. P. Frédégand d'Anvers, op. cit., p. 337, *seq.*

[60] *Flores Seraphici*, in two volumes, published at Cologne ; vol. i, in 1640 ; vol. ii in 1642. P. Charles was also a genealogical artist. In 1650 he produced a genealogical tree of the Franciscan order : *Epilogus totius ordinis Seraphici P. N. S. Francisci.* It was printed at Antwerp.

racy against the Crown. Philippe duc d'Arschot, the head of the family, was made a prisoner at Madrid, whither he had gone to represent the case of the nobles against Roose ; he died in prison seven years later. Père Charles was banished the country and only allowed to return in 1643 ; and it was mainly through his energy and sagacity that the fortunes of the house of Aremberg were restored.[61] He died in 1669. It has been well said of him that he had three loves —his country, his order and the Church:[62] for these three loves he spent his life.

In Belgium, as we have said, the Capuchins were favoured by the great families as well as loved by the people ; their more heroic work in the Low Countries was in the States held by the Calvinists. There in company with other religious orders they laboured valiantly to save what they might of the losses sustained by the Church. In the Dutch provinces it was much the same story as elsewhere on the continent where Protestantism had established its sway ; a story in which political motives united with the spiritual devastation wrought by a negligent and worldly clergy, to the undoing of the Faith of the people.

In 1625 the Vicar Apostolic of Utrecht sent to Rome an appalling account of the spiritual desolation of the Dutch provinces ; and in consequence the religious orders were called upon to send missionaries to his aid.[63] A band of Belgian Capuchins was sent under Juvenal de Bergues and missions were established in Frisia and Gueldres. Another missionary centre was established at Bois-le-duc when the Dutch, after capturing the town in 1629, took over the parishes and gave them to Calvinist ministers. In this mission worked Père Basile de Bruges, an heroic figure, who driven from one place established himself in another, travelling the countryside to bring spiritual consolation to the harassed Catholics. So the missions were carried on under the difficulties inherent in the situation ; until at the General

[61] Besides his active intervention as counsellor to his family in the restoration of their property, he wrote a well documented history of the house of Aremberg for the information of the family : *Marques des Grandeurs et Splendeurs de la Maison Souveraine des ducs d'Aremberg*. cf. P. Frédégand d'Anvers, op. cit., p. 316, *seq.*

[62] P. Frédégand d'Anvers, op. cit., p. 352.

[63] cf. Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., II, p. 474, *seq.* Frédégand d'Anvers, op. cit., p. 293, *seq.*

Chapter of the Order in 1643 a question arose as to the propriety of the friars engaging in missionary work which demanded a complete break with the ordinary life of a Capuchin, particularly in the matter of wearing secular dress, the use of money and the hearing of the confessions of seculars. From the beginning the Roman superiors had scrupled about granting dispensations in these matters. It was a delicate question concerning which much could be said for and against. On the one hand it was urged that the salvation of souls was of more importance than the wearing of the habit and the other precepts of the constitutions which were in question ; even the use of money, though ordinarily forbidden to a Capuchin, should not stand in the way of the demand for missionaries when the faith of the people was in peril. As against that, it was argued that no man can do ultimate good if he loses his own proper spiritual character and vocation.

That there were individual missionaries who suffered no loss by the dispensations, was allowed ; but the continuance of the dispensations would be to the injury of the weaker individuals themselves and to the specific vocation of the Order generally. At the General Chapter of 1643 the majority of the capitulars decided that for the maintenance of the Capuchin vocation in its purity it was desirable to withdraw missionaries from those countries where the conditions made it necessary to wear the secular dress and to use money ; and a decree to that effect was obtained from the Congregation of Propaganda. Had the decree been put into effect it would have meant the abandonment of the missions in Holland, Great Britain and Ireland, in all which countries the religious habit could not be worn. It never was put into effect except in an attenuated measure because of the protests and appeals to Propaganda from those who would have suffered by the withdrawal of the missionaries. In Holland the majority of the missionaries were recalled to their communities ; but experienced missionaries such as Père Basile de Bruges were allowed to remain at their posts ; nor in fact were the missions altogether evacuated until the French Revolution. In Great Britain and Ireland the decree seems never to have been promulgated.[64]

[64] P. Frédégand d'Anvers, loc. cit. ; Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., p. 486. cf. Apollinaire de Valence, *Histoire des Capucins*, op. cit., I, p. 181, *seq.*

CHAPTER XII

FRA CRISTOFORO AND OTHERS

(i)

WHILST the events described in the last chapter were taking place beyond the Alps, in Italy the Capuchins had arrived at the hey-day of their influence as preachers and workers. It would be difficult to exaggerate their influence at this period over the minds and imaginations of all classes of the Italian people from the prince to the peasant. Their broad humanity made them the confidants of all who were in trouble or distress ; their fearless courage frequently stood between the oppressed and the tyrant. As preachers they swayed the crowds, whether of the educated or the uneducated, who flocked to their sermons. In times of public calamity, and these were frequent enough, the Capuchins were always amongst the first to volunteer for public service. Manzoni in his immortal novel *I Promessi Sposi* has left us in his Fra Cristoforo a life-drawn picture of the typical Italian Capuchin of the period. Fra Cristoforo was not one man but many. He was to be found not only in Milan, but wherever there was a Capuchin friary in the peninsula. Under various names he was worshipped with affectionate reverence from Lombardy to Apulia and across the straits in Sicily. In Apulia he was known as Giacomo da Molfetta ; in Sicily as Arcangelo dei Sacci ; in Florence as Pier-Francesco Mainardi ; in Parma as Romaaldo dei Conti Castellina ; in Lucca as Giuseppe di Fulvio Dondori ; in Milan as Felice Casati. But he had innumerable other names, as you would learn if you wandered through the cities and country parts.

Many of these Frati Cristofori were men who could deal with a Don Rodrigo, or a truculent *conte*, or a court official on the footing of men of their own class in society, with the

added advantage of being of a religious profession constrained to no class ; for the Capuchin habit cloaked men of every social class in a simple consecrated community. The lay-brother who answered the door might be a Visconti,[1] whilst his companion in the kitchen was a peasant ; amongst the priests you could be sure to find sons of the nobility, of learned professions and of the mercantile class—men who had made the sacrifice when they donned the coarse garb of the Lady Poverty—together with those who had consecrated to God the poverty to which they were born. Out of such an intermingling of natural aptitudes and characters was produced the Fra Cristoforo of the people's trustful reverence.

A philosophical enquirer might not find it easy to explain in a phrase the peculiar attractions of these Capuchin frati in the fluid social world of the time. It was not merely their simple humanity and ready sympathy. Some knew them mainly as stern monitors or wrathful prophets, and yet reverenced them. Perhaps the most potent element in the attraction lay in the manifest disinterestedness both of their austere self-discipline and of their social activities. None could say they were seeking themselves whether as individuals or in their corporate capacity. The tradition of rigid poverty was still strong amongst them. In fact one reason alleged for their popularity was that in their rigid poverty they made fewer demands upon the charity of the people than did other religious. When in 1656, Donna Barbara Medici left a substantial legacy to the Ospidale Maggiore in Milan on condition that the hospital should contribute to the building of a new friary for the Capuchins who served the hospital, the friars refused to accept any part of the legacy on the ground that the hospital needed the whole of it.[3]

This disinterestedness was the more marked because of the incessant labours of the friars, not only as preachers but

[1] Fra Bernardo de' duchi Visconti was a lay-brother. He had refused the bishopric of Brescia on the death of Cardinal Duranti in 1558. Bernardo died in 1565. cf. Valdimiro da Bergamo : *I Cappuccini della Prov. Milanese*, parte 2a, vol. i, pp. 72-73. A Fra Ippolito de' Visconti died in the friary of Milan in 1614 (*ibid.*, p. 322). Another Capuchin of the same family was Fra Simpliciano, who became General of the Order in 1656, and died in 1663 (*ibid.*, p. 377, *seq.*).

[3] Antonio Sala, *Biografia di S. Carlo*, op. cit., p. 306.

as what to-day we call, social workers. Yet not all the Frati Cristofori were popular preachers or even social workers in the ordinary sense.

Not infrequently it was an unlettered lay-brother who was the Fra Cristoforo to gentlefolk and peasants alike in the city or district in which he happened to reside. For instance, there was Fra Serafino da Montegranaro, the questing brother in the Marches of Ancona, to whom the world and his wife went with their troubles of soul or body. A guileless simple soul was Serafino, whose austerity towards himself was made beautiful by his never-failing thoughtfulness for the ordinary needs of less heroic mortals. He would starve himself but would never let another go hungry if he could help it. He would break his accustomed fasts if by eating he could induce an ailing brother to eat with him. He spent his nights in prayer, but by day was at the service of those who needed him. At times these came in crowds to the friary gate ; everyone who had a trouble must bring it to Fra Serafino ; and he, all unconscious of himself, would dispense the comforting word or the needed rebuke as might a trusty almoner dispense his lord's alms. No confessor had more trustful penitents. But it was for the sick poor that he had an ever wistful compassion. He begged for them and worked for them. To satisfy his charity the friars allowed him to cultivate part of the friary garden for their benefit ; and though Serafino was no trained gardener, his labour of love produced far choicer fruits than were to be found in other gardens. Serafino thanked God for His bounty as he distributed the gifts, just as he thanked God for His mercy when the sick recovered at his touch. So Serafino passed through life, God's almoner and the confidant of troubled souls.[4] Others saw in Serafino's life a path of miracles testifying to the lay-brother's sanctity ; he himself was only conscious that God was good. But to those whom he comforted, he was himself the witness to God's loving-kindness.

Serafino was of the elect whom God chooses to compel a dim-eyed world to acknowledge His presence amongst His

[4] He was canonised in 1767. cf. *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, VIII, p. 369, *seq.* Boverius, *Annales*, *anno* 1604, 20, *seq.* ; d'Aremberg, op. cit., II, p. 722, *seq.*

creatures ; yet he was of the type which made the Capuchin a beneficent power in the earlier half of the seventeenth century wherever a friary was to be found.

(ii)

In estimating the work and influence of the Capuchins, these friars of merely local fame are not to be lost sight of; it was their influence perhaps which took deepest root in the hearts of the Italian people. There were others—and they were not a few—whose fame spread throughout the whole peninsula and even beyond. Of such were the great preachers of whom some account will now be given.

Since almost the beginning of the Reform, the Capuchin congregation had given to Italy a long line of preachers whose powerful eloquence had contributed largely to the great spiritual change which had come over the face of the country and sunk into the heart of the nation. The days were long past when an Italian crowd was willing to accept as a preacher of the Gospel the exquisite classicist or the entertaining buffoon or the schoolman proud of his dialectical skill. As the old Capuchin chronicler had reminiscently remarked : " after the Capuchins had begun to preach, the people would no longer listen to those who did not preach the Holy Scripture." That in itself was indicative of the spirit which created the Catholic Reformation. The marvellous success of the Capuchins as preachers—a success which they shared with the Jesuits, Oratorians and Barnabites—lay in the fact that they voiced the new religious spirit and gave it the food it needed. But whilst the Jesuits exerted their influence chiefly through their schools, the Capuchins, more particularly in Italy, were pre-eminently the popular preachers.

The well-authenticated accounts left us of the preaching tours in Italy of San Lorenzo da Brindisi and Giacinto da Casale, whom we have already met with in Germany, read almost like romance : they tell of the vast crowds awaiting the arrival of the preachers in the city or district in which they were due to preach ; of the invasion of the friaries in

which they sojourned by multitudes anxious to obtain their blessing ; of the smuggling away of the preachers by night to some other town, before the peace of the friary could be regained ; of the tense emotion of the vast congregations assembled in the public squares because no church would hold them ; of the numerous conversions of public and private sinners which followed the sermons. The accounts recall the triumph of San Bernardino's eloquence ; only here we are not in the Italy of the Renaissance but in the Italy of the Seicento, humbled yet proud, dreaming of deliverance from the foreigner and meanwhile turning to religion, with a chastened spirit but a new and more virile faith.

Lorenzo da Brindisi and Giacinto da Casale were but two amongst many Capuchins who swayed the mind and heart of Italy by their magic personality and eloquence in this later period of the spiritual awakening ; but they may be taken as two distinct types of the Capuchin preachers of the period : the purely oratorical and the dramatic. They had indeed common traits ; in both there was a sincerity born of spiritual experience, a sincerity which forbade mere rhetoric and made use of book knowledge only as it had passed into the religious experience of their own lives : both, too, addressed their audience with an intimate knowledge of the actual struggles and temptations and aspirations of the men before them, and with the knowledge born of sympathy. They spoke to the heart of the people as only men can who know the struggle and pain, the strength and weakness, of the people they address. And what was of not less importance at the time, the preachers of both types were scholars in the matter appertaining to their ministry. The Capuchin preacher was not lightly chosen for his work ; as their constitutions ordained, only those might be selected for the office of preaching who were at once more than ordinarily proficient in sacred studies and in prayer ; and this constitution was rigorously enforced.

As one reads to-day the sermons of these popular preachers whom the crowds flocked to hear, one realises the strength and vitality of the religious revival which had transformed the soul of the Italian people during the sixteenth century ; for the popular preacher reflects the depth or the shallowness

of his worshippers. One needs to read the sermons themselves to appreciate the significance of the stories of their effect upon the multitude.

Take Lorenzo da Brindisi. His preaching tours in Italy, often to his own chagrin, became a triumphant progress. Men and women of all classes, the clergy as well as the laity, flocked to his sermons ; and, be it noted, the labourers of the surrounding country would leave their work in the fields to be present at his sermons. His presence in the pulpit would put a stop to the ordinary labours of the city and district, so keen were the people to listen to him. Then take the sermons themselves as he has left them in many volumes. Not a word of mere rhetoric, but compact of thought—the thought of the student-saint. Reading the sermons in cold print, it is not easy to understand the enthusiasm of the crowds. They are full of instruction and arresting thought ; but their meditative leisureliness, the almost meticulous endeavour at times to elicit the exact significance of a particular phrase of Scripture, not infrequently by a reference to the original Hebrew or Greek text, would seem to militate against popular success. Delivered by an ordinary preacher they would undoubtedly be adjudged interesting by the thoughtful listener, but they would hardly be stimulating to the multitude. One feels the emotion blending with the thought even in the written word ; but there the emotion is as a smouldering fire. At the preacher's contact with his audience it became a flaming fire ; under the spell of the preacher the purport of his words was burned into the intelligence and heart of his audience. That was Lorenzo's power.

As light to fire—but a warming, stimulating light—one might compare Mattia da Salo with San Lorenzo. There is penetrating thought in Mattia's sermons, but it is borne on the wings of a fine imagery, and there is melodiousness in his words. He visualises his subject and imparts to you something of his own vision. And there is a palpable tenderness underlying his sternest rebuke. In reading his sermons one realises the significance of San Felice's greeting when Mattia visited the saint on his deathbed : " I know you well, my flowering May." For sheer, lyrical beauty few sermons can compare with Mattia's sermons on the Passion

of our Lord ;[5] yet it is a beauty not so much of diction as of the whole visualised thought. But Mattia's most marvellous gift was his use of Sacred Scripture, whose language he blends with his own as though it were the very woof of his own thought ; and whose imagery is as the natural medium of his thought. He would clothe the mystical teaching of the Pauline epistles in the imagery of Isaias or the Canticle of Canticles as without any effort. There were others amongst the Capuchin preachers who used Scriptural imagery with effect, yet none so felicitously, and as it were naturally, as Mattia da Salo.

Another outstanding orator at this period was Mattia's disciple, Fra Girolamo da Narni, perhaps in pure oratory the greatest of all the Capuchin preachers. Girolamo came of a family of lawyers in high repute in Umbria, and was destined by his father to carry further the family's good fortune. But at sixteen years of age[6] in spite of the angry opposition of his family and friends he entered the novitiate of the Capuchins, and took his vows the following year, 1579. As a religious, Girolamo walked faithfully in the footsteps of the early Capuchins, notwithstanding that his health was at all times delicate. He fasted rigorously and was much given to prayer ; he shunned honours and was ever as the humblest of the brethren ; even when he was Vicar General of the Congregation he would take his share in the most menial labours of the community. Yet he was an indefatigable student, and his brilliant intellectual qualities and his marvellous eloquence quickly made his name a household word throughout Italy. As a theological student before his ordination to the priesthood, he was suddenly called to preach a Lenten course at Terni, owing to the illness of the appointed preacher ; and he was at once marked down as a preacher of extraordinary power. When he preached the Lent at Todi in 1602, men came from the

[5] *Delli Dolori di Gesu Cristo*, preached in the Duomo of Milan in 1597 and published at Brescia in 1598. cf. *infra*. Appendix II.

[6] Marcellinus de Pise says " fifteen years," but the register of his profession gives his age as " seventeen and a half years." cf. *L'Italia Francescana*, Aprile—Giugno, 1926 (Roma), p. 122. For the biography of Girolamo da Narni, see Marcellinus de Pise : *Vita et Gesta P. F. Hieronymi Narniensis* (Roma, 1647) and the same author's long biographical notice of Girolamo in *Annales Ord. Cap.*, t. III, pp. 904-940.

neighbouring towns and cities to listen to him. His fame reached Rome and he was called by Paul V to preach in San Luigi dei Francesi and afterwards at San Lorenzo in Damaso. Cardinals and bishops vied with the populace to obtain places in the overcrowded churches and a regular attendant was Cardinal Robert Bellarmine, who is reported to have said that if St. Paul were again on earth, he would alternately go to hear the apostle one evening and Girolamo the next.[7] In 1606 he was appointed by Paul V to be Apostolic Preacher to the Papal Court, and it was said that never before had so many prelates flocked to hear the preacher. Gregory XV, who frequently consulted him on the affairs of the Church, would have created him cardinal, but Girolamo with tears pleaded to be allowed to remain a simple friar. Yet he was forced to accept the highest offices in the Order. The keenest intellects of Rome were to be found in Girolamo's cell in the friary near the Quirinal and later in the friary built by the Barberini.[8] At his death in 1632 all Rome mourned his loss. His obsequies took place in the Church of the Gesù ; the Master of the Sacred Palace pronounced the panegyric ; the General of the Jesuits officiated at the function, and moreover ordered every priest in the Society to say a mass for Girolamo's soul.[9]

There is a superb simplicity in Girolamo's sermons both in his thought and diction. The music of his words holds you ; the flight of his thought not infrequently astounds you ; yet what he says is what every right-thinking Christian might have thought, only did not. His mind dwells in the large open spaces, his eyes scan both earth and heaven as one to the manner born. He is well read in the Fathers of the Church

7 De Pise : *Vita et Gesta*, p. 176. But a more authentic statement would seem to be that of Cardinal Ludovisi in his preface to a collection of Girolamo's sermons—*Prediche recitate al Palazzo Apostolico*, published at Rome in 1632-1633. Card. Ludovisi writes : *Certe Robertus Card. Bellarminus, nostri temporis Augustinus, Augustini votum potitum se dicebat, quoniam dum Narniensem audiret, audire sibi videbatur Paulum apud Petri Cathedram concionantem.*

8 cf. Wadding : *Scriptores Ord. Min.*, pp. 117-118. Luke Wadding was an intimate friend of Girolamo.

9 Later historians have attributed the institution of the Congregation of the Propaganda Fide to the initiative of Girolamo. His biographer, Marcellinus de Pise, does not mention this, either in his biography of Girolamo or in the account in the *Annales*. On the other hand, see Girolamo's stirring appeals to the Pope and cardinals in *Prediche, ut supra*, to arouse themselves and send missionaries to save and propagate the Faith in all parts of the world.

and the philosophers, yet bears his learning easily. He is impassioned but with a restrained passion ; and he knows no fear. As a preacher it is for him to tell the truth as he sees it without respect of persons ; yet in his denunciation of wrongdoing, in his protest against sloth or tepidity there is an appeal in his voice which only a brute could ignore. One can well understand the action of the bishops who listened to his sermon against the evils of non-residence, and when the sermon was concluded, returned without delay to their dioceses. He had the rare gift of conveying to his audience the sense of the beauty of right-doing. Even to read his sermons is to feel the beauty of the ways of God and of religion. And his thought is all so unlaboured as though his knowledge came to him in vision.[10] And yet this preacher who could make his audience sense the eternal beauty of the Christian life was seldom free from physical pain. His life was itself a veritable triumph of spirit over matter.

Yet it is Giacinto da Casale who represents in a superlative degree the more common type of the Capuchin " revivalist " preacher of the period. The account written by an eye-witness of Giacinto's mission in Piacenza in 1617 has its counterpart in many similar records of the time. Giacinto's eloquence, as we have said, was the eloquence of the drama, yet not the less sincere and spiritually effective.

Thus writes the astonished Francesco Marchetti to his Eminence, Cardinal Farnese, in the summer of 1617 :[11] " There came to Piacenza to preach the Lent, Padre Giacinto da Casale, a Capuchin, a preacher of singular character, of wonderful goodness of life and of rare courage. . . He began his course of sermons on Ash Wednesday, and the great concourse of people prove the expectancy and thirst for the saving water of the divine word. The great Duomo was dangerously packed ; people came from far and from near, both men and women, to hear the preacher. The commotion and the fruitfulness began from the be-

[10] cf. *infra*, Appendix II.

[11] *La Transformatione di Piacenza operata da Dio col mezze delle prediche Quareesimali e sermoni della settimana santa all' Oratione delle Quarant' Hore, fatti nel duomo s' anno 1617 dal R. P. F. Giacinto da Casale, predicatore capuccino* (In Brescia). The dedication to Card. Farnese is dated 5 August, 1617, and signed " Francesco Marchetti." A rare copy is in the Capuchin Library of San Lorenzo, Rome.

ginning ; and every day was as a Good Friday, what with tears and striking of the breast and the voices of contrition. Frequently too, during the sermons were heard the voices of the demons in the unhappy obsessed, mingling with the words of the preacher, so that the church seemed veritably as a day of judgment. These rebellious spirits even set themselves to preach ; and the father giving way they confirmed all he had said, crying aloud to the confusion of us poor sinners that now was their final ruin. And truly to my thinking he were more demon than man who would not be moved at seeing in the pulpit that face so uplifted with devotion, so emaciated as though he were one of the ancient anchorites who had come from his cell in the wood ; or one who would not change his mind at seeing that countenance as pitiful in softening hearts as it was terrible in its detestation of sin, in reprehending vice and in threatening the dire chastisements of God ; or finally one who could remain stolid listening to that voice, clear, sonorous and penetrating, and to such burning arguments, clothed with the zeal of God, and afire with the ardour of the Holy Ghost. . . Before he entered the pulpit, a confused murmur of voices, because of the multitude, filled the great church ; at the first word intoned by the father, the noise suddenly subsided and there could be heard a silence as great as the silence in a well-regulated cloister of mortified religious." The narrator then sums up the results of the sermons : " such restitution of goods, such confessions of those who had been unconfessed for many years, such giving up of dishonest practices and promises of amendment on the part of the notaries and lawyers ; so many youths, in particular those of the nobility, asking to be received into the father's order (the which could not be because the number was too great for all to be received) ; so many conversions of women of the streets that the homes were too small to accommodate them all and the father appealed for funds to buy another house, and out of the funds many were given dowries and found husbands ; so many feuds were settled and so many enemies embraced each other, in the course of the sermons. In the shops, the piazza and the houses, nothing was talked of but the preacher and his sermons, and amendment of life and the doing of penance for past sins. " Whence there has happened so

real and solid a change in the Piacentini that not only have they made a beginning of true and hard penance towards themselves but have given tokens of Christian piety and liberality towards others; so that, as the bishop attests, more alms have been given in this one Lent than were given in twenty years before."

As in Capuchin missions generally at this period, the mission concluded with the Forty Hours' devotion. It began in the evening of Palm Sunday. The preacher had exhorted everyone to prepare himself for this devotion by confessing his sins and receiving the sacrament of the Holy Communion.

"At last," writes the bewildered reporter, "the destined day arrived, Palm Sunday, on which we must render to the Divine Majesty the peaceful possession of our hearts and once for all drive forth from Piacenza the great enemy against whom the father had declared war at the beginning of Lent. I speak of sin." The bishop had published a plenary indulgence to be gained by all who took part worthily in the devotion; a spacious oratory had been erected near the great door of the Duomo for the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament; twenty noblemen of the city had been enrolled to marshal the processions. The oratory was arranged to represent a panorama of the Holy Land; Nazareth, Bethlehem and Jerusalem, the Holy City, were all there. Above in the empyrean heaven was a representation of the King of Heaven amidst a choir of angels. Below this representation was Mount Thabor, the hill of the Transfiguration, upon which was erected the altar of the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. It was hastily constructed, says the reporter, for the devotion was unexpected; but he dwells upon its varied detail, particularly upon the choirs of angels in the empyrean who sang the chants. It was nine o'clock in the evening when the bishop carried the Blessed Sacrament from the Sacrament Chapel to the altar of the Exposition.[12] Before him walked the preacher, barefooted, a rope

[12] It seems to have been a common custom to begin the devotion at 9 o'clock on Palm Sunday evening. In an account of the Quarant' Ore preached in Lorenzo in Damaso, Rome, in 1608, by Fra Fedele da San Germano, the order is thus set forth: "The most opportune hour" to begin the Devotion is at 9 o'clock on Sunday evening. The Procession takes place at 7 o'clock; at 9 o'clock the confraternity of Our Lady enters and begins the adoration. The exercises go on till 1 o'clock on Monday morning. The next entry is at

round his neck, a crown of thorns upon his head, and a large cross in his hands—a living picture of penitence. With them walked " the twenty cavaliers of Christ," then the more venerable seignors. At the Oratory were gathered the canons of the cathedral and the magistrates, and the Duomo was filled with men, the women being excluded. "As the Blessed Sacrament was placed on the altar, from the right came the sound of sweet and devout singing, and when this was ended, from a grotto of broken rocks came forth the father, carrying a crucifix in his hand. He faced the people with a countenance more angelic than human, and with a piteous voice which penetrated to the heart, even the hardest, he intoned the words of the prophet Jeremias : ' Return thou rebellious Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not turn away my face from you ; and I will not be angry for ever.'[13] This was always the theme of his sermons though the discourses were all different ; and with incredible discrimination he accommodated his sermons to the quality of the people who came.[14] And throughout the evening, until the last hour, so great were the numbers that the Duomo could not contain them ; and amongst them were the flower of the city. It seemed more a miracle from heaven than a human thing."

Yet the set sermons did not exhaust the preacher's labours during the mission. Three nights in each week, as the reporter tells us, Giacinto had an informal gathering of the city youth who assembled in the great hall of the bishop's palace, sometimes to the number of two hundred and fifty, nearly all " nobili e titolati." He would give them a short instruction and then they would pray together. Besides this, his own room was besieged by callers anxious for spiritual direction. And yet throughout the six weeks' mission Giacinto fasted three days in the week, taking no food except a

11 o'clock on Monday morning and the Devotion continues till 1 o'clock at night. The third day begins at 11 o'clock on Tuesday morning and continues till midnight. On Wednesday devotion begins at 11 a.m., and continues till 4 p.m., when the the Procession of Reposition takes place. See *Essercitio d'Amorosi Sforzi per ridurre il peccatore a Dio* . . . dal P. F. Fedele da San Germano (In Como, no date). The book was edited and published in 1614 by Bartholomeo Mainone.

[13] Jer. III, 12.

[14] The sermons went on throughout the Devotion as the different bands of people arrived to take the watches.

little bread and wine ; but we read the same of most of the successful preachers. They must have been men of iron constitution or of that vital spirituality which can sometimes take the place of physical strength.

But whatever the style of the preacher, behind the emotional appeal there was always the background of solid instruction. Much as the astonished reporter was struck by the tense atmosphere, the dramatic representation and the marvellous results of Giacinto's mission, it was the substance of the preacher's sermons which left the most vivid impression —*quei ragiomenti in particolare tanto efficaci e singolari.*

As we have more than once remarked, the devotion of the Quarant 'Ore, or Forty Hours' adoration, was a special feature of the Capuchin mission. It had been revived by Mattia da Salo in 1568, after the fashion in which it was preached by Fra Giuseppe da Ferno ; and from that time it seems to have taken an increasing importance in the revivalist missions of the Capuchins. As propagated in Italy by Giuseppe da Ferno, it was a public act on the part of the city or commune, for which the ecclesiastical and civic authorities made themselves responsible and in which they officially took part ; an act at once of social penitence and of the recognition of the kingship of Christ in public as in private life.[15] It is as such that it plays its part in the Capuchin missions in Italy in the first half of the seventeenth century.

We have seen it preached by Giacinto at Piacenza ; nine years later, in 1626, a similar preaching and celebration at Carpi calls forth an enthusiastic description from another eye witness.[16] The preacher on this occasion was Fra

[15] This appears, for instance, from the detailed account of the Quarant' Ore held at Borgo San Sepolcro in 1538. The City Council, urged by Giuseppe da Ferno, unanimously voted for it and decreed that it should be held in perpetuity on the last Sunday of June and the two days following. For fifteen days before the Devotion began, the city bells were to call the people to prayer, and peacemakers appointed by the Council were to take measures to heal discords and enmities. The civic officials and the soldiers were to assist at the Devotion, together with the bishop and chapter, and the city was divided into " watches." See the official act of the Council (from the communal archives of Borgo San Sepolcro) in *Anal. Ord. Cap.*, XXXIX, p. 48, *seq.*

[16] *La Instituzione della Quarant'Ore in Carpi : Relazione inedita di Anonimo contemporareo, publicata con note de L. M.* (Luigi Marini) (Modena, 1888). See also the account of the Quarant'Ore at Castro Villarum (?) in 1629. *Anal. Ord. Cap.* XXI, p. 362, *seq.*

Giovanni da Sestola—he who made a Capuchin of a duke of Modena.

The devotion began on Palm Sunday at the close of the Lenten course ; and was preceded by exhortations on the part of the preacher that the people prepare themselves to celebrate the devotion worthily. A confraternity was formed to superintend the carrying out of the ceremonies. There were penitential processions to the altar of the Exposition, in which emblems of our Lord's Passion were carried by members of the confraternity clothed in the Capuchin habit. The city was divided into watches ; each group of watchers proceeding to the church processionally led by a " fratello " in his habit and carrying a cross ; a rope was round his neck, the sign of the penitential character of the pilgrimage. Men and women took turns in the watches ; the governor of the town led one group of men-watchers ; his lady-wife led a group of women-watchers ; other notable citizens and their wives led other groups. At each hour there was a short sermon and a hymn, followed by silent adoration.

The public procession, usually in memory of our Lord's Passion, played a large part in the apostolate of the Capuchins in whatever country they were ; it was a public profession of faith and not a mere ecclesiastical pageant ; and the procession always ended with a sermon. It was seldom that the Quarant 'Ore did not give occasion for the establishment of some confraternity to bind together the more zealous citizens, or members of a parish, in some act of piety and active work of mercy. The Capuchin preachers had from the beginning been zealous promoters of such confraternities ; they understood the value of the corporate sense.

Very easily might the pageantry of the Quarant 'Ore and the procession have become a mere emotional display or empty external rite, such as the Capuchins in their origin had reacted against, were it not for the austere purpose and intense spirituality of their own life which in these missions they shared with their audience. These processions had their place as a public profession of faith, but it was the aim of the preacher to vivify that faith and render it fruitful in conduct. And chief amongst the means they employed to that purpose was their instruction of mental prayer, by which they led even the simplest folk to pray with mind and heart, not

merely with the lips ; to pray intelligently and with the uplift of their affections towards God.

For instance, there was Fra Cristoforo Verucchino, who won the hearts of the people wherever he went and was well known in many of the cities of Italy. For years it was his custom, when giving missions, to assemble the people after vespers and " simply and without oratory " instruct them how to pray. He began with the vocal prayers in common use—the *Pater*, *Ave* and *Credo* ; the penitential psalms and the rosary. These prayers he would explain and paraphrase, unveiling with a wealth of illustration, but in the simplest language, the meaning of the words and phrases. Next he would take his audience through the mass and assist them to prepare themselves for confession and holy communion. Having thus taught them the intelligent and devout use of their accustomed prayers and devotions, he further proceeded to initiate them into the practice of meditation, teaching them how to meditate upon the mysteries of our Lord's life and passion. When he was too old and broken any longer to give missions, some who had listened to his instructions begged him to allow his notes to be published that his work might continue.[17] This habit of the preachers of instructing the people to meditate on the life and passion of our Lord, led to the publication of no small number of popular books of meditation, adapted to the simplest minds ; some of them of unaffected beauty of thought. Many of them reproduce the meditations on the Passion preached during the devotion of the Quarant 'Ore :[18] for the Quarant 'Ore, as preached by the Capuchins, was itself an exercise in mental prayer ; the outward pageantry was but the pre-

[17] *Essercitii d'anima : raccolti da S. S. Padri : in diverse citta d'Italia predicat dal R. P. F. Christoforo Verucchino del ordine de Frati Minori Cappuccini* (In Venetia, 1605). The work was edited by Battista Rosa, canon of the cathedral of Venice. See also as an example of the same method of instruction : *Devota meditatione sopra la Salutatione Angelica fatta dal R. P. Silvestro di Franco da Rossano dell' ordine de' Cappuccini nell' anno del Signore*, 1578, *mentre egli predicava nella Chiesa Cathedrali di Fermo* (a Fermo, 1578), in *Anal. Ord. Cap.*, XIII, p. 252, *seq.*

[18] One such which deserves publication is the meditation-addresses of Fra Bernardino da Nocera : *Pro Oratione Quadraginta Horarum, F. Bernardini de Nucera*, MS. in the Provincial Archives of the Capuchins at Assisi. There are forty sermons or meditations in all, beginning with the Agony in the Garden. They are written in Italian, except the headings. Fra Bernardino died at Perugia in 1635 ; cf. P. Francesco da Vicenza : *Gli Scrittori Cappuccini della Provincia Serafica* (Foligno, 1922).

disposing means to the more spiritual exercise of mind and heart.

They were very human, these preachers ; and they knew their people. As we recall their work and the method of their apostolate, the words of the Gospel come back to us : " He had compassion on the multitude."

(iii)

Yet great as was the fame of the Capuchin preachers throughout the whole of the Italian peninsula and almost incredible the enthusiasm which was aroused by their preaching during the first half of the seventeenth century, it is not the preachers of whom the Italians of a later generation retained the most vivid memory. Fra Cristoforo, under his many aliases, may have been a powerful preacher and by his preaching have cast a wholesome spell over the imagination and heart of the people of his generation, yet it was not for his preaching that his memory passed into the cherished possession of the generations which came after him ; but for the broad, disinterested charity which made him the ever-ready helper and friend of those in need.

The constant services of Christ-like charity, which linked the life of the friar with the more intimate life of the suffering world in which he moved, were more luminously in evidence in times of public calamity—and these were frequent enough in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As a recurring refrain amidst their manifold activities comes their reiterated service in times of plague or pestilence. It was perhaps this service which won them a people's most enduring gratitude.

Already we have spoken of the bubonic plague which swept over Europe in the second quarter of the seventeenth century. As we have seen, it appeared in Languedoc in 1627 ; three years later northern and central Italy was in its grip.

It came to Italy, it is said, in the wake of the army which the Emperor had sent to make good his claim on the duchy of Mantua in 1629 ; for a few months it teased the population of Lombardy with inconsiderable outbreaks here and

there, but in the Lent of the following year it suddenly burst upon Milan with a shattering blow and then rapidly swept through the provinces ; Modena, Parma and Florence with their territories reeled under the dread visitation, and from Leghorn to Venice could be heard the wail of death. No such vast calamity was remembered by men, though dire calamities crowded the memory of the oldest amongst them. In two years over one hundred thousand of the plague-stricken passed into the lazaretto of San Gregorio outside the city of Milan, besides the thousands who died in the city itself.[19] In the same period in and around Lucca it is estimated that twenty-five thousand died.

Many of the religious orders can tell a tale of heroic daring and selfless devotion on the part of those they sent out to minister to the sick and dying during that dread terror. Here in brief is the tale of the Capuchins.

In the province of Brescia, of the two hundred friars who went forth to minister to the sick, forty-seven died ; in Tuscany of ninety-two who enlisted, fifty-one died. In the lazaretto of Milan, twelve friars died on service ; in Parma, twelve ; in Piacenza, eighteen ; and so the tale goes on.[20] Not only priests, but young students and lay-brothers were amongst the workers and victims. In some of the crowded lazaretti when the friars were stricken down, they were taken back to their friaries to be nursed, that they might not fill beds needed for other victims ; and thus whole communities became infected, as in the friary of Milan where nineteen of the community died. It was a heroic course deliberately accepted that others might be saved. In many of the cities the Capuchins were called upon to take charge of the lazaretto and organise the service, as formerly in the plague which devastated Milan in 1576.[21] Many are the names of these heroes of charity which still, three centuries

[19] See the attestation of the health " conservators " of the city in Valdimiro da Bergamo : *I Cappuccini della Provincia Milanese*, parte ii, vol. ii, appendice 1a, pp. xiii-xiv.

[20] cf. Valdimiro da Bergamo, op. cit., vol. ii, append. 1a, p. ii, *seq.* : *I Conventi ed I Cappuccini Bresciani* (Milano, 1891), p. 548, *seq.* ; Cirillo da Bagna : *Umili Eroi nella Peste Bubbonica*, 1629-31 (Parma,1912) ; Sisto da Pisa : *Storia dei Cappuccini Toscani*, vol. i (Firenze, 1906), p. 328, *seq.* ; Lodovico Biagetti da Livorno : *Alcune Notize : Storiche e Biografiche sulla Peste degli anni* 1630-31-33 *in Toscana.*

[21] See *supra*, vol. I., chapter vi.

after the event, wake a grateful reverence amongst the Italian people. Chief amongst them in Milan is Fra Felice Casati as all are aware who know that city and its people.

He was of the conti Casati who for several centuries played an honourable part in the life of Milan. In 1605, at the age of twenty-two, he had renounced wealth and social position to become a Capuchin. Generous and fearless in character, he was a born leader; one upon whom men leaned in face of difficulty. Throughout his long life—he died in 1665—he bore the burdens of others, either in official or unofficial offices of trust. He was preaching the Lent in Santa Maria del Castello in Milan when the rapid course of the plague filled the hearts of the Milanese with dread. Daily the mortality was leaping up and in the lazaretto di San Gregorio outside the city the daily toll had risen to one hundred lives; and the speedy death of a heroic physician, Felice Appiano, who had volunteered to take charge of the lazaretto, spread consternation throughout the city, so that none other would venture to take his place. In this dilemma, the Tribunale della Sanita appealed to the Commissary Provincial of the Capuchins; and Fra Felice was appointed to take charge of the lazaretto, with full powers of administration both civil and ecclesiastical. The lazaretto was a city in itself; throughout Fra Felice's administration it numbered from fifteen thousand to sixteen thousand patients, besides servants and attendants. The lazaretto was totally unorganised when Fra Felice took charge; even bread and medicines were lacking; the children born in the lazaretto and orphaned at birth by the death of the mothers were without proper care, and daily the death-rate increased. Fra Felice's resource and indomitable will brought order into this city of misery; and also such consolation of soul and body as a tireless watchful sympathy could give. One of his first cares was to organise a separate camp for the convalescents; these he would himself lead out of the lazaretto as a mother might lead her children with comforting hope; then he would return to meet the new crowd of incoming patients to attend to their immediate need and comfort. Soon his personality towered above the stricken city; men looked to him as to their one hope; his very presence gave courage and comfort. And

as though the care of the lazaretto were not enough for one man's burden, he was next called upon by the city magistrates to organise further relief in the matter of burying the dead in the city ; for fear had entered into the people's souls and the dead were cast into the streets and left there, none daring to bury them. For twenty months Fra Felice fought the plague. Twice he himself was stricken down. Once he was given up for dead, but when the weeping friars and servants were moaning his loss, he raised himself and bade them dry their tears : " he was not going to die yet." When other friars fell sick, he sent them to the friary to be nursed ; but he himself would not leave the lazaretto, conscious as he must have been of the need of his presence to keep the heart in that fearful multitude.

When at last the plague died down and the lazaretto was closed, the Tribunale della Sanita drew up and signed an attestation of his heroic labours, as a memorial for coming generations.[22]

In like manner did Fra Gianantonio da Bergamo take charge of the lazaretto of Verona at the request of the government of Venice. When the plague ceased, he alone of the Capuchins who had served in the lazaretto, remained alive ; and he was so broken with sickness that he could not raise himself to leave. Four noblemen of the city consequently carried him on his bed to the friary.[23]

In Parma the lazaretto was put in charge of Fra Romualdo dei Conti Castellina, noted for his gentle courtesy and love of peace. Twelve of his companions died in their service of the sick. Fra Romualdo survived, and when the plague ceased in Parma, he set out for the neighbouring towns where the plague still lingered, and went from place to place serving the stricken people wherever they were to be found.[24]

In Florence, during the terrible outbreak of 1630-1632, the Capuchins did service in all the hospitals and lazaretti ; in the city alone thirty-eight friars were told off to attend the

[22] The attestation is given in *I Cappuccini della Provincia Milanese*, loc. cit., p. 13, note. In 1644 Felice Casati was sent as envoy of the citizens of Milan to Philip IV of Spain to represent to the king the grievances under which the city was suffering. As a result of his outspoken protest he was for a time exiled to Corsica. *ibid.*, p. 13, *seq.*

[23] *I Cappuccini della Prov. Milan.*, loc. cit., p. 3.

[24] *Umili Eroi*, op. cit., p. 18, *seq.*

sick, and of this number sixteen died in service. The first to die was Fra Romolo a lay-brother who was serving in the lazaretto of Badia : he died on 22 November, 1630. The following day in the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova died Padre Gian Francesco of the Belanti of Siena. He had been serving in the hospital but two months when he was stricken down. When they told him that his end was approaching, he raised himself on his bed and intoned the *Te Deum Laudamus*, and singing gave up his soul to God. But it was Fra Pier Francesco Mainardi whose name was for long uttered in Florence with a wondering reverence. Pier Francesco Mainardi was a hero with a past ; and men love the converted sinner whose sins even they must forgive for the ultimate humility of a great saving love. There had been a day when the Florentines had crossed themselves when his name was mentioned and prayed : " From two clever rogues, Pier Strozzi and doctor Mainardi, may God deliver us !" Mainardi was a doctor of law and an advocate as unscrupulous as he was brilliant. Men said he had no conscience as he had no morals ; the law was the net with which he unblushingly caught the victims of his greed and lawless pleasures. An affair with the wife of a prominent citizen, whom he seduced under threat of ruining her husband, proved his ultimate crime and the cause of his conversion. The poor woman sickened and died. On her deathbed she sent for her betrayer and implored him to do penance for his sin. A period of remorse followed ; then suddenly Mainardi disappeared from Florence and as a penitent sought refuge in the Capuchin friary at Cortona. That was in December 1625. A year later he was admitted as a novice into the Order. His utter humility and exquisite gentleness—in sharp contrast to his former bearing—now won the hearts of all who came in contact with him. He lived, it seemed, but to abase himself and to do acts of selfless kindness to others. When the plague broke out he was among the first to volunteer for service. But it was at the second outbreak in 1633 that his great opportunity came. He was sick in Florence when the call came ; but he pleaded to be amongst the chosen company. From the first he had hoped to make the final atonement by giving his life in the service of the plague-stricken ; and knowing that, the superiors numbered him

amongst those who were to serve. The call gave him new life and he was quickly at his post. Duke Ferdinand II, who had stood manfully by his people all through the terror, placed Mainardi in supreme charge of all the hospitals and lazaretti in the city ; and it was in large measure due to his tireless energy and masterly organisation that the second outbreak was subdued within a few months. He would have welcomed death had it come to him as it came to others of his fellow friars ; but again he survived. Yet he lived but a year longer. When his work amongst the sick was finished, he obtained leave to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land that he might thank God for His great mercies in the place where our redemption was wrought. On his return journey he fell sick at Cagli in the Marches of Ancona, and died there on 7 September, 1634. He was forty-five years of age.

When the pestilence again filled Italy with mourning some twenty years later, the same story of heroic service was again repeated ; and though much that the Capuchins achieved in the seventeenth century has been generally forgotten, their services in those dread years of suffering have not been forgotten.

(iv)

Penitents such as Pier Francesco Mainardi were not unknown in the Capuchin friaries elsewhere than in Florence. The austerity of the life attracted them ; its Christ-like pity admitted them ; conversion of heart was the one thing demanded of them. Nor did their admission scandalise the people ; rather were these transformed sinners another link of sympathy between the friary and the outside world. At the tribunal of the people—such was the Catholic instinct—as at the tribunal of God, much was forgiven them because they loved much. Not only in personal austerity and self-discipline but in a consuming service of self-forgetful charity did these penitents make good their wasted years.

A more common type of penitent was Fra Giambattista d'Este, for a brief while Alfonso III, Duke of Modena, the successor of that duke Cesare to whom the Pope refused the succession to the duchy of Ferrara. Alfonso's sin had been a lapse from the piety of his first youth. As he grew into man-

hood he developed traits of character which caused the people to dread the day when he would succeed to the sovereignty ; they might tolerate his continuous absorption in pleasure to the neglect of the duties of his position, but his overweening haughtiness and vindictiveness of temper boded ill for the future. Perhaps it was the remembrance of the treachery of the counsellors who delivered Ferrara into the hands of the Pope; perhaps a strain in the blood of the d'Este: however that may be, men prayed that Duke Cesare might live long. The death of his wife, Isabella of Savoy, in 1626 brought about a change in Alfonso's character. The remembrance of her unaffected piety and of her frequent appeals to his own better self, struck him with remorse ; and he determined then and there to abandon the world and become a Capuchin. That could not be until his eldest son, Francesco, was of an age to take up the reins of government at Duke Cesare's death ; but Alfonso began at once to school himself to a humble gentleness and a practical piety. Duke Cesare died in 1628 and for awhile Alfonso reigned ; the following year he abdicated in favour of his son. In company with his confessor, Fra Giovanni da Sestola, he left Modena and made his way to Meran in the Tyrol, and there was admitted into the Capuchin Order. He begged to be received as a lay-brother ; obedience to his superiors compelled him to accept the priesthood. After his ordination his thoughts turned to the mission fields in Germany or in England. He would thus atone for the apostasy from the Faith of princes of the house of Este, such as the Duke of Brunswick and the prince-bishop of Halberstadt ; but neither the Pope nor the Emperor would allow the adventure. Eventually he returned to Modena. There and in the neighbouring territories he laboured with no little success as a preacher, evangelising the cities and the countryside. But his special choice was to serve the sick both within the friary and outside. He died in 1644.[25]

It was men such as these who made the *Cappuccini* loved in Italy.

[25] *Del Cappucino d'Este che fu nel secol il Ser Alfonso III Duca di Modan adal P. F. Gio. da Sestola, Predic. Cappucino* (Modana, 1646). cf. Pellegrino da Forli, op. cit., I, p. 573, *seq.* *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, II, p. 265, *seq.*

CHAPTER XIII

THE FOREIGN MISSIONS

(i)

From what has been recorded in this history it will be clear to the reader that the strength of the Capuchins lay in the simplicity of their great faith and not in any elaborate organisation or calculated programme of external activities. Their success depended upon the personality of the labourer; and this was necessarily so in an Order whose rigid poverty banned the means by which highly organised activities are made possible. The system—if system it can be called—has its dangers, as every system has ; it can flourish only as it produces men in whom the personal sense of responsibility is strong and in whom the guiding faith of the whole body is vivid and fresh ; as we have already pointed out. For that reason the Capuchin worker has always been at his best when labouring as a pioneer or free-lance or when acting in a capacity in which the personal equation is of more value than impersonal means or programme ; a knight-errant of St. Francis' ideal fraternity, rather than a soldier in organised battalions of an army.

In nothing has this trait shown itself more conspicuously than in the adventures of the Capuchin missionaries who went forth to sow the seed of the Gospel in lands where the name of Christ was unknown or rejected.[1]

It was not until 1587 that the Capuchin congregation officially assumed responsibility for " missions amongst the infidels " ; but long before that individual friars had been allowed to make the great adventure.

The first of these were Juan Zuaze de Medina and Gio-

[1] For the history of the Capuchin Missions, see Rocco da Cesinale : *Storia delle Missioni dei Cappuccini*, op. cit.; P. Clemente da Terzorio : *Le Missioni dei Minori Cappuccini : Santo Storico*, 7 vol. (Roma, 1913-1925).

vanni da Troia ;[2] the one a Spaniard, the other a Neapolitan who had spent some years in Spain. Missionaries they were, inasmuch as they went forth to bear witness to their faith ; yet rather would I term them simply " heralds of the great King "—for theirs was the simple faith which made St. Francis on the morrow of his disinheritance chant the song of his new-born vocation to the incredulous footpads of the hills. Yet they deserve remembrance in the annals of the Capuchin missions, for theirs was the mystic flow without which no religious missionary ever yet has achieved a spiritual conquest.

Both had begun their lives with a view to the profession of arms and then had become Franciscans amongst the Observant friars in Spain ; and both eventually found their way to Italy and there joined the Capuchins ; Giovanni da Troia in 1530, Juan Zuaze nine years later. Not until 1550 did they come to know each other. Giovanni da Troia was learning the secrets of the mystic way in the fastnesses of Apulia whilst Juan Zuaze was learning the same wisdom in a solitary's cell attached to the friary of Montepulciano in Tuscany. In that solitary's cell, Fray Juan had marvellous spiritual experiences, when his spirit seemed to pass beyond the limitations of time and dip into the sea of eternity, when the future was as the present to him in matters of the earth which concerned him, or when his soul was abashed with a knowledge of God he could not utter in words. Yet he was the most lovable and approachable of men. Here is his portrait ; of small stature with the face of a child, his face half encircled with a short black beard ; his eyes at once serious and laughing ; his countenance radiating light. All who looked on him thought him another St. Francis. In the dark days which followed Ochino's apostasy, his unflinching prophecy of the resurrection and glory awaiting the Capuchin Reform did much to steady the suffering fraternity.

Yet deep down in the heart of Juan Zuaze was a longing to bear witness to the love of Christ for man to those who knew Him not, to give his life in that witness to Christ's love, as Christ had given his life in love for us. And away in

[2] Concerning Juan Zuaze see Bernardino da Colpetrazzo, MS. cit., pp. 552-575 ; 932-946 ; and the same chronicle, for Giovanni da Troia, pp. 1081-1101. cf. Boverius, *Annales*, *anno* 1551, III, *seq.*

far-off Apulia, Giovanni da Troia was longing to give a like witness and make the same sacrifice.

On the festival of the Porziuncola in 1550, both came to Assisi to gain the Great Pardon. Thus they met for the first time. They regarded each other silently, and to each the soul of the other cried out in glad recognition of spiritual kinship, and without a spoken word they ran to each other and embraced. Afterwards they spoke of the secret longing they shared with each other. Finally together they went to the Vicar General of the Reform, Bernardino d'Asti, and begged permission to go to the East to preach the Gospel to the Turks. The following year, with licence from Pope Julius III, they took boat at Venice for Constantinople. There they preached in the public streets ; their message was the simple confession of their own faith ; Christ was the true God and Redeemer of men ; and Mahomet no true prophet. There followed arrest and imprisonment and scourging, until some Catholic merchants intervened. Their lives were saved, but they were expelled the city and put on a boat going to Palestine. Here at the holy places they deepened their souls in love of the crucified Redeemer, and then passed on to Egypt to fulfil their purpose as heralds of Christ's Gospel. At Alexandria some Catholics would have constrained them to keep silence or return home, but they escaped and found their way to Cairo, and there sought an audience of the governor that they might announce to him and his court the Gospel of Christ. At first the governor seems to have regarded them with contemptuous annoyance as men rendered foolish by overmuch fasting. Eventually they were scourged and cast into an underground dungeon to be left to die of starvation. They heard the sentence with a joyous contentment. Eight days later the French ambassador arrived in Cairo and obtained an order for their release ; but when the door of the dungeon was opened the two friars were dead. Call it, if you like, an adventure of folly ; but it is in such adventures of folly, in which men give their all for a simple profession of the faith that is in them, that all the greatest of the world's achievements have begun. From their graves these pioneer martyrs call with insistent call to the kindred spirits who will follow them—follow them perhaps with a larger equipment of knowledge or a more worldly

wisdom and with a more palpable achievement. Yet if these lack the capacity for folly of a simple faith, they are assuredly the lesser men.

Juan Zuaze and Giovanni da Troia, in achieving nothing but their own death for Christ and achieving that with a happy contentment, achieved the fundamental glory of any man, the glory of a steadfast loyalty to the faith which is his life. With these pioneer missionaries of the Capuchins, their faith was a faith in the love of Christ the Redeemer, to whom they would give love for love.

From such foundation does the story of the Capuchin missions " amongst the infidels " spring. That others followed in the footsteps of the first two we know, and that the following was generous may be gathered from a passage inserted in the revised Constitutions of 1575 which admonishes the superiors not to withhold the necessary permissions on the ground that the friars are yet few in number.[3] But of these early missionaries few memories remain. Not until thirty years later does the record begin of a continuous and ever widening missionary activity of the congregation beyond the borders of Christendom. In 1584 two Capuchins, Pietro da Piacenza and Filippo da Roccacontrada, were appointed by the Pope to accompany an expedition sent by the Archconfraternity of the Gonfalone to Algiers for the redemption of Christian captives. They were commissioned to bring spiritual help and comfort to the Christians held in captivity, and to reconcile apostates from the faith.[4] Both died within a year, victims to the plague ; but for some years a succession of Capuchins seem to have ministered to the captives in Algiers ; amongst them Fra Ambrogio, known to the world as the marchese Stampa da Soncino, senator of Milan.[5] At the age of forty-nine he renounced his titles and estates in favour of his sons, his wife being already dead, and took the habit of a Capuchin. Then must he take his place amongst the young students to learn theology. When any of these, remembering his years and what he had been, would relieve him of some menial task, he would insist that he was

3 Cap., XII.

4 *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, II, p. 258 ; Boverius, *Annales*, *anno* 1585, VIII.

5 Valdimiro da Bergamo : *I Conventi ed I Cappuccini Bresciani*, p. 137, *seq.* ; *I Cappuccini della Prov. Milanese*, parte 2a, vol. i, p. 95, *seq.* ; Boverius, *Annales*, *anno* 1601, XI, *seq.*

now a Capuchin and must not be defrauded of his share in the common duties. But hardly was he ordained priest when he begged Pope Clement VIII to allow him to go and preach to the infidels. Thereupon the Pope sent him with Fra Ignazio da Bologna to Algiers to proclaim the Jubilee of 1600 to the Christian captives; granting the same privileges and pardons as might be gained by the pilgrims to Rome.[6] In Algiers Fra Ambrogio was well received by the Dey, a renegade Christian, and between the two there grew up a close friendship, and many a night did they spend in converse about religion; but by day Ambrogio worked freely amongst the captives until one day the appearance of a Spanish war vessel off Algiers spread consternation in the city, and the populace demanded the death of the two Capuchins whom they now suspected to be spies in the service of Spain. The Dey, to save their lives, cast them into prison, sending them word that no harm would befall them; then, as soon as he might, he arranged to transport them to Spain with two hundred of the Christian captives for whose deliverance Ambrogio promised to raise a ransom. But before the arrangements were completed Ambrogio was struck down by mortal illness. The Dey called in his most noted physicians and himself watched by the bed of the dying friar; and when after a few days Fra Ambrogio died he was given an honourable burial in the Christian cemetery. So ended Fra Ambrogio's short career of five years as a Capuchin friar. Four years later his body was taken from its grave and carried back to Milan; and when the coffin was opened it was as when he lay upon his deathbed. But Fra Ignazio remained in Algiers to minister to the Christian captives. A few years later he was done to death in an uprising of the people at the threat of a Spanish attack on the city. For many years that was the history of successive Capuchin missions in the dominions of the Moors.

As we have said, it was in 1587 that the Capuchins formally embarked on "foreign-missionary" activities. In that year the General Chapter of the Order commissioned four friars to undertake missionary work in Constantinople; they were Pietro della Croce, superior of the mission, Dionigi da Roma and Giuseppe da Leonessa, all three priests,

[6] cf. Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., I, p. 505; *Bull. Ord. Cap.*, VII, p. 268.

and a lay-brother Gregorio da Leonessa. This missionary adventure, however, had a brief existence. Pietro della Croce and Dionigi da Roma, after little more than a year's work, died in attending the sick during an outbreak of the plague ; and Giuseppe da Leonessa shortly afterwards was cast into prison and tortured, and finally, with his companion Gregorio, expelled the country. The mission is chiefly notable as an episode in the apostolic career of Fra Giuseppe, whose main work was afterwards the evangelisation of the country districts of Southern Italy. A saint as well as a preacher, he was canonised by the Church in 1746.[7]

Not until a quarter of a century had passed was another official foreign mission undertaken, though individual friars continued to receive permission to go and minister to Christian captives and incidentally preach to the unbeliever. Moreover in 1603 four Capuchins were sent by the Archduke Maximilian of Austria to Persia to preach the Gospel there ; but this seems to have been a brief adventure. Austrians and Spaniards were in bad repute in the Eastern kingdoms.[8]

On 20 April, 1611 the Queen-Regent, Marie de Medicis, wrote to Père Léonard, Provincial of Paris, requesting that four " capable and devout " Capuchins should be attached to the colonising expedition about to be sent by France to the West Indies ; and on 5 July the General of the Order acceded to the request and authorised Père Léonard to nominate the missionaries. The majority of the friars in Paris volunteered for the enterprise ; the four chosen were Yves d'Evreux who was appointed superior, Claude d'Abbeville, Arsène de Paris and Ambroise d'Amiens, picked men who had already proved their worth as missionaries in France.[9]

[7] *Anal. Ord. Cap.*, V, pp. 106-108. cf. Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., I, p. 474. Giuseppe and Gregorio da Leonessa were substituted for Egidio di Santa Maria who was first mentioned in the letters of obedience dated June 20, 1587. *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, VII, p. 284. *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, VIII, p. 99, *seq.* cf. Boverius, *Annales, anno* 1612, 44, *seq.*

[8] cf. *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, IV, p. 235.

[9] For the story of this mission see Claude d'Abbeville : *Histoire de la Mission des Pères Capucins en l'Isle de Maragnan et terres circonvoisines* (Paris, 1614) ; *Voyage dans le Nord du Brésil fait durant les années* 1613 *et* 1614 *par le Père Yves d'Evreux ; publié d'après l'exemplaire unique conservé à la Bibliothèque Impériale de Paris avec une introduction et des notes par M. Ferdinand Denis* (in series : *Bibliotheca Americana*, Leipzig and Paris, 1864) (but a more complete manuscript exists in the General Archives of the Capuchins in Rome). Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., I, p. 439, *seq.*

The expedition left France on 19 March, 1612 and arrived at Maranhao to the north of Brazil about the end of July, when the seigneur de Razilly took possession in the name of France and Père Yves, in the name "of Jesus Christ the King of Kings and the world's Redeemer." It was, says Claude d'Abbeville, with tears of joy that they sang the *Te Deum*, at being the first to take possession of this infidel land for Christ.[10] The place where the cross was set up was named Saint-Louis to be the future capital of the new colony ; and here the native chiefs from the neighbouring districts assembled to pledge their loyalty to the King of France as soon as they were assured that the French had come as " friends " and not to take their people into slavery. They moreover professed themselves ready to be instructed in the Christian faith, and at once assisted the missionaries to erect a church. Yves d'Evreux and Ambroise d'Amiens settled at Saint-Louis, whilst their companions went further afield. Two months later Père Yves was left to carry on his work at Saint-Louis alone, for on 9 October, Ambroise d'Amiens died of pleurisy. By December all the chiefs of the territory had accepted France and the missionaries, and Razilly, accompanied by Père Claude and six natives, returned to France to give an account of the new colony. Their arrival in Paris was one of the sensations of the year. Crowds met them in the suburb Saint-Honoré and accompanied them to the church of the Capuchins, where a little later the six natives were baptised, the Archbishop of Paris officiating, and the king and queen standing sponsors at the baptism. The following year, twelve Capuchins under the leadership of Père Archange de Pembroke were sent to reinforce the mission ; but they found Yves d'Evreux struck down with paralysis. With the aid of the natives baptised in Paris, the new missionaries established centres for instructing the people in the Catholic faith ; by the end of 1615, about six hundred and fifty of them were baptised. And then came the end of the mission. The French were forcibly evacuated from the colony by the Portuguese under Albuquerque, and the natives, who loyally stood by France, were butchered and enslaved. It was a tragic ending to a promising beginning.

[10] cf. Semelaigne (Dr.), *Yves d'Evreux: un Essai de colonisation au Brésil chez les Tapinambos* (Paris, 1887). Claude d'Abbeville, op. cit., X, p. 62.

(ii)

Meanwhile, in France, Père Joseph le Clerc du Tremblay dreaming his dream of a Catholic France which should be the heart of Christendom, and the dynamic centre of activities for the renovation and extension of the Catholic Church, was planning his vast schemes for the realisation of his dream. At the very moment when the news of the disaster of Maranhao was brought to France, he was setting out for Rome to obtain the Pope's approval for the " Apostolic Missions " in the Huguenot centres of France and for his projected crusade against Islam. For the next few years the organisation of these two schemes occupied his immediate attention; these and the foundation of the congregation of the *Filles du Calvaire*, itself a subsidiary means to the great end. But the missionary expedition of Maranhao was not without its effect on his mind. For the moment the foreign missionary adventure of the French Capuchins had been checked ; but only for the moment in the mind of Père Joseph ; with the Crusade would come the opportunity for a yet wider missionary enterprise. The crusade however, hung fire, and as we have seen, was eventually abandoned. But Père Joseph by that time had already planned and begun to give effect to a missionary crusade of the vast proportions in which alone his tireless brain could scheme—a crusade to cover three continents in a practically simultaneous offensive.

The reader will at once surmise that this vast missionary adventure was not to be an adventure of simple faith such as had impelled the missionary zeal of Fray Juan Zuaze or Fra Giuseppe da Leonessa. Simple faith was to be found in abundance in many of the missionaries Père Joseph would send forth ; but it was his part to harness this simple faith to something of this world's prudence. Not otherwise indeed could the results have been achieved which we are now to chronicle.

In January 1622, Père Pacifique de Provins, of the Paris Capuchins, set sail from Marseilles, having been commissioned to visit Constantinople, Asia Minor and Egypt with a view to the establishment of Capuchin missions. Pacifique, as you will learn, was a man of remarkable energy and with a keen faculty of observation ; a man of ideas, too impatient,

perhaps, to be altogether wise. All this is evident from the reports he published of his travels.[11] Having made his tour of inspection he went to Rome, where he saw Pope Gregory XV and the heads of the newly-established Congregation of Propaganda Fide. The result of this visit was that Père Léonard, Provincial of Paris, and Père Joseph le Clerc were appointed commissaries in charge of the Capuchin missions in the East, and Pacifique himself was commissioned to undertake missionary work in Constantinople and the neighbouring districts of Greece and Thrace. Thereupon Pacifique returns to Paris to report to the two commissaries of the missions, and then learns of Père Joseph's vast scheme to establish Capuchin missions throughout the land of Islam. The following year Père Joseph went to Rome and obtained the approval of Urban VIII for his projected missions, and was empowered to choose the best religious and send them wherever they were needed in the countries approved by the Holy See ; only one exception was made as regarded the Holy Land, where the Capuchins were excluded from the Holy Places committed to the charge of the Observant Franciscans.

Straightway four friars under the leadership of Père Archange des Fosses were sent to Constantinople (Pacifique was destined for Palestine), and armed with letters of recommendation from the Propaganda Fide to the French ambassador and the Latin Patriarchal Vicar. The church of St. George in Galata was assigned them. A little later they were given another church in Pera. Their mission was twofold—to propagate the faith amongst the Mahommedans and the schismatics, and to minister to the subjects of the King of France and the Christians under his protection. As French-

[11] *Relation du Voyage de Perse faict par le R. P. Pacifique de Provins, Prédicateur Capucin : ou vous verrez les remarques particulières de la Terre saincte. . . . Aussi le commandement du Grand Seigneur Sultan Murat pour establir des Couvents de Capucins par tous les lieux de son Empire. Ensemble le bon traitment que le roy de Perse fit au R. P. Pacifique*, etc. (Paris, 1631). P. Pacifique gives a detailed description of the country, customs and legal administration of the Persians.

See also his account of his missionary journeys in the Antilles : *Relation ou description des îles Saint-Christophe et de la Guadeloupe* (Paris, 1648). In the Arch. di Stati, Milan (Busta, X—*dei Cappuccini*) there is a MS. by P. Pacifique : *Relation succinte et fidelle des missions des Capucins en toute les parties du monde.*

cf. Apollinaire de Valence : *Trois lettres du P. Pacifique de Provins* (Rome, 1890) ; Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit. III, cap. IV ; *Clemente da Terzorio*, op. cit., vol. vi.

men they were cordially received by the Turkish authorities, who a few years previously had expelled the Jesuits because, so it was asserted, of their sympathy with Spain. France, be it remembered, had for many years been the one European ally of the Turk. Yet though their nationality opened the door to them, it was the life of the Capuchins and their austere poverty which gained them respect both amongst the schismatics and the Mahommedans. The Capuchin mode of life, remarks Pacifique, had an attraction for the Eastern mind. Even the English and Dutch ambassadors favoured them, each undertaking to supply the friars with food for one day in the week. One rule Père Joseph insisted on—the friars must live their religious life in the mission as far as possible as they lived it in their friaries at home. The example of the religious life, he held, would be their chief weapon in making conversions. The letter, addressed to the superior of the Capuchins at Schio in 1628 by the two commissaries in Paris, gives some idea of the working of the missions. The missionaries were to learn the language or languages of the natives amongst whom they were to work, so as to be able to preach and hear confessions in the native tongues; they were to take special care to instruct the young. They were not to expect quick results nor grow weary and lazy if conversions were slow in coming, but they must be patient and unwearying in their work. Where possible they shall form confraternities based on the rule of the Third Order of St. Francis but adapted to local needs, to assist them in their work.[12]

Within a short while, the missionaries in Constantinople were preaching and hearing confessions in Turkish, Greek and Armenian. The missions grew rapidly. New centres were established in Schio, Naxos, Smyrna, Syros and Andros, as fresh contingents of friars were sent out.

Almost simultaneously missions were established in Palestine, particularly amongst the Druses of Lebanon, and in Egypt. In 1626 Pacifique de Provins began his journey to Persia to open out new missionary fields in that country and Mesopotamia. He left Sidon in the summer of 1626 and went by way of Damascus to Aleppo, where he remained for about two years, whilst his associate, Père Gabriel, returned

[12] See the letter in Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., III, pp. 69-71.

to France for further instructions. At Aleppo the Capuchins were received by the Venetian consul and taken under the protection of the Cade. A school was opened and a Capuchin was appointed by the Maronite Patriarch to act as his Vicar General. A few years later the Capuchins of Aleppo published a new version of the Bible in Arabic, translated from the Greek and Latin ; and Père Justinien de Tours wrote a Catechism in Armenian, Arabic, Turkish and Kurdish. The mission at Aleppo was particularly successful in winning over schismatics to the Church ; amongst the converts were the Sorian Patriarch of Antioch, Ignatius Simeon XXIII, the Greek Patriarch Macarius and the Armenian Patriarch Cachadour.

Having received the desired instructions from Paris, Pacifique with two companions left Aleppo on June 20, 1628. He traversed the desert and in fifty-two days arrived at Bagdad. Here they were received by the Khan and their French nationality was a passport to his favour. An oratory was opened, and on the feast of the Assumption of our Lady mass was said and a *Te Deum* sung, " since for eight hundred years no mass had been said there." At Bagdad Pacifique left Père Just, and after another twenty-five days of travel arrived at Ispahan. Here he found Carmelite and Augusiniant friars already at work. These received him cordially, as did also the Armenian Patriarch who took the two Capuchins into his monastery, washed their feet and entertained them with all brotherly charity. The only people to show any hostility were the English and Dutch merchants who suspected an attempt on the part of France to capture trade. At the invitation of the Shah, Pacifique next proceeded to Kazbin, where he was received with honour as a subject of Persia's friend, the King of France. Amongst his credentials Pacifique had brought portraits of the French King and Queen as presents for the Shah ; and the presentation was made the occasion of a great banquet given by the Shah in honour of the missionary envoys. The ceremonies concluded, Pacifique came to business and requested permission to establish mission-hospices at Ispahan and Bagdad. Not only was this permission granted but the Shah presented Pacifique with a house in Ispahan. And here Pacifique would have been willing to labour for the rest of his days : Persia

appealed to his imagination as well as to his apostolic charity. In his description of the country he finds himself in the garden of Eden and the courtesy of the people was of a piece with the gracious character of the land. But for once he had bargained without his host. The Shah, in his satisfaction at the courtesy of France in sending the portraits of the King and Queen, would return the compliment by despatching Pacifique to the French Court with letters of friendship and costly gifts. Pacifique had no mind to return to France thus summarily, but wisely he judged that "it is an ill thing to contradict princes"; and, first taking over the mission-hospice for future work, he accepted the embassy and set out for France. As a result a contingent of Capuchins was sent to Persia, but Pacifique was retained in France. For some reason—I know not what—he had forfeited the confidence of Père Joseph.[13] In Persia the Capuchins conducted their mission as in the Turkish dominions; within a few years they had translated parts of the Bible into the Persian tongue and had published a Persian-Latin dictionary.[14] From Persia they extended their missionary labours to Georgia[15] where they worked side by side with the Theatines; and a few years later to India.

The first Capuchin mission in India[16] was established in 1639 by Père Ephrem de Nevers, one of the pioneers of the Persian missions, and Père Zeno de Baugé. Two years later we find Père Ephrem traversing India on his way to Pegu in Southern Burma. It was an adventurous journey which ended at Madras. After travelling fifty days Ephrem came to Bagnazar, the capital of Golconda, where he was welcomed and entertained by a cousin of the king, whose joy in life was the study of mathematics. He was urgent that Ephrem should settle in this kingdom, offering as an inducement to give him the rank and dignity of a learned professor; and it was with some difficulty that Ephrem, pleading the orders of his superiors, was at length allowed to proceed further. He

[13] cf. P. Candide de Nant: *Pages Glorieuses de l'Epopée Canadienne* (Paris, 1927), p. 207, note 2.

[14] cf. Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., III, p. 273, notes 1 and 2.

[15] cf. Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., III, cap. VI; Clemente da Terzorio, op. cit., vol. vii.

[16] cf. Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., III, cap. V; Norbert de Bar-le-Duc: *Mémoires utiles et nécessaires sur les missions des Indes orientales* (Lucques, 1742).

arrived at length at Madras, hoping to find a boat to take him to Pegu. But at Madras he was detained by the prayers of the Catholics, who were without a priest to minister to them. Most of these were Goanese Christians ; but there was also a colony of English and Irish Catholics whose simple faith appealed to the heart of Père Ephrem. The English Company added their request to that of the Catholics and offered to build a church if he would remain. Ephrem, struck by the spiritual desolation of the district, applied for instructions to his superiors and was told to remain there. Very soon, however, difficulties arose with the neighbouring Goanese clergy, who resented the presence of the Capuchin. By this time the Goanese had become sunk in superstition ; and the clergy were as ignorant as their people. Ephrem, in setting his face against some superstitious practices, at once aroused the wrath of the clergy, and was summoned to appear before the Holy Inquisition at Meliapur. At his trial, as he related afterwards, he was astonished to find that the Inquisitors not only knew no theology but had never read the Scriptures.[17] He was condemned as a heretic and cast into prison. As soon as the news reached the ears of Père Zeno at Surat, he appealed to the Archbishop of Goa and the governor of the Portuguese dominions to obtain Ephrem's release ; but without avail. The matter was then referred to the French King and the Pope. The French made representations to Portugal ; the Pope ordered the Inquisitors of Meliapur to release the friar under pain of excommunication ; but the Inquisitors remained obdurate. Eventually the King of Golconda took a hand in the affair and threatened to send an army and raze Meliapur to the ground unless the Capuchin were set free. Then only did the Inquisition order the release. Père Ephrem returned to Madras and was shortly afterwards joined by other Capuchins. A few years later Capuchins were working in Pondicherry and along the Malibar coast.

[17] cf. Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., III, p. 313, note 4. Boullaye-le-Gouz (*Les Voyages et Observations* (Paris, 1653), p. 223, says P. Ephrem was imprisoned "*pour avoir presché à Madraspatan que les Catholiques qui fouloient et trampoient dans des puis les images de Sainct Anthoine et de la Vierge Marie estoient impies . . . Cette doctrine dèplue aux Religieux Portugais.*" It was probably a superstitious custom similar to the Neapolitan custom of dragging their favourite saints in effigy through the streets when invocations were fruitless.

Eight years before the Capuchins arrived in India Père Joseph sent missionaries to Egypt, under the leadership of Père Gilles de Loches who had already won his spurs in Persia. Another band was sent in 1633 and amongst these was Père Agathange de Vendôme, a missionary in Syria.[18] Agathange de Vendôme was one of those men who apart from their actual achievement remain in the memories of others as an inspiring personality. He had begun his missionary career on the " Apostolic Mission " in Poitou. When Père Joseph's projected missions amongst the infidels became known, Agathange ardently desired to be one of the missionaries, but in his humility he deemed himself unworthy of a possible martyr's crown, and remained silent when others were offering their service. Then in 1628 came the command from his superiors and he went to Syria. Here he worked chiefly in the Lebanon, and by his successful labours came to be styled " the apostle of the Lebanon." In Egypt his chief attraction was to the Copts and more especially to the Coptic monks in the solitudes of Nitria, not a few of whom he reconciled to the Catholic Church. He had great hopes of reconciling the aged Coptic Patriarch of Alexandria, who, it is said, actually wrote to Pope Urban VIII, offering his submission.[19]

At the same time that Agathange joined the mission in Egypt, there arrived Père Cassien de Nantes, a Portuguese by blood, whose parents had settled in Nantes. Cassien was a linguist who could speak Arabic and Greek. He, too, worked for the reconciliation of the Coptic monks of Nitria to the Catholic Church. The mission seems to have been particularly fruitful amongst the schismatics of different allegiances; Nestorians, Sorians, Armenians, Greeks and Copts were brought into the Catholic Church in some numbers.

Then, in 1636, came orders that six Capuchins should be sent to Abyssinia, to stem the falling away of the Catholics in that country, owing to the persecuting policy of the new Emperor, who had been raised to power in an uprising

[18] cf. Emmanuel de Rennes : *Abregé de la vie et du martyre des Reverends Pères Agathange de Vendôme et Cassien de Nantes Capucins Prestres. Extrait de plusieurs manuscrits contemporains*, 2 edit. (Paris, 1882) ; *Anal. Ord. Cap.*, VI, p. 308, *seq.*

[19] The relations between the Coptic monks and the Capuchins remained cordial. In 1651 Propaganda allowed the Capuchins to reside in Coptic monasteries. Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., pp. 412-413.

against the Portuguese. Agathange de Vendôme and Cassien de Nantes were amongst the six chosen for this mission. Two years were spent in learning the language, and making the necessary preparations. Cassien with his unusual facility, sufficiently mastered the language to produce several books in the Abyssian tongue, explanatory of the Catholic Faith.

The six Capuchins set out from Cairo in 1638. They went in three parties by different routes. Agathange and Cassien sought to make their way to Gondar, but were arrested on 5 August, when they had hardly crossed the frontier. They were brought before Tetros, the governor of the province, and Mark, the recently appointed Coptic bishop of Abyssinia. Mark had known the two Capuchins when he was abbot of a monastery in Nitria ; and as a result of conversations with Agathange had made his submission to the Roman See. He still professed himself in unity with Rome when he was consecrated by the Patriarch as bishop of the Abyssinian Copts. On his arrival in Abyssinia, however, he fell in with the policy of the emperor and became bitterly anti-Roman. It was he, now, who was the chief accuser of the two Capuchins. Offered their lives if they would abjure the Roman See, Agathange replied that that was impossible as they had come hither to win the people of this kingdom to the Catholic Faith and obedience to the See of Rome. Two days after their arrest Agathange and Cassien were done to death by hanging. When he heard the sentence Agathange took the cord he wore round his waist and smilingly offered it to the executioners ; it was a good rope, he said, to swing them to Paradise.[20] In the same spirit had Sir Thomas More gone to the block. Of the other four Capuchins, two died of the plague on their journey ; the other two reached their destination. The martyrdom of Agathange and Cassien only stimulated the missionary zeal of their brethren ; others followed ; three of these ten years later were also put to death. Still others followed. In the meantime other Capuchin missionaries had penetrated into Morocco. Strictly speaking the mission to Morocco was the beginning of Père Joseph's attempt to

[20] See the attestations forwarded to Rome in Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., III, p. 749, *seq.* The two martyrs were beatified by Leo XIII in 1905. For an instructive account of the missions in the East see *Brevis ac vera relatio visitationis factae a P. F. Ambrosio de Rennes . . . in Aegypto, Syria, Caldea et India Orientali in anno* 1644, 45, 46, 47, in *Anal. Ord. Cap.*, vol. xlii, p. 250, *seq.*

convert Islam; for the first Capuchin missionaries arrived in Morocco in 1624.[21] They were Pierre d'Alençon, Michel de Vezins, priests, and Frère Rudolphe d'Angers a lay-brother. They were attached to the expedition of the seigneur de Razilly who was sent by France to negotiate a trade-treaty between that kingdom and the King of Morocco. The purpose of the missionaries was to minister to the Christian slaves and to the Andalusian Moors who had carried with them their Christian faith—or some semblance of it—when expelled from Spain ; but a further purpose was to preach Christ to the Moslem. Razilly, who had been well received in Morocco five years previously, anticipated no difficulties. To his indignant surprise, on landing at Safi he and his company, including the Capuchins, were made prisoners and held to ransom. Razilly himself and Frère Rudolphe were, however, allowed to return to France to raise the required ransom ; the others were thrown into prison. It was not until six years later that Razilly returned with the ransom and a new contingent of Capuchins ; but by that time Pierre d'Alençon and Michel de Vezins were dead, victims of the plague. Yet during those six years the two Capuchins had not lain idle, but had been allowed to exercise their ministry amongst the Christian prisoners, of whom there were many languishing in captivity.[22] A lovable character was Pierre d'Alençon ; as his letters, written from his prison to Père Joseph, testify. In them there was no complaint ; rather is the note one of joyous gratitude that in his imprisonment he is enabled to serve and comfort his fellow prisoners. When at length the plague broke out, he and Père Michel were given great freedom that they might nurse and minister to the sick and dying amongst the Christian prisoners and slaves. Pierre himself fell a victim whilst ministering to the others ; and such was the impression made upon the Moors by his selfless charity that the king ordered him an honourable burial. Before long Père Michel followed him to the grave. A few weeks later Razilly arrived with the ransom, and a

[21] François d'Angers : *Histoire de la Mission des PP. Capucins au royaume de Maroque* (Nyort, 1644). Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., III, p. 453, *seq.* ; Pellegrino da Forli, op. cit., I, p. 123, *seq.*

[22] According to the *Acta* of Propaganda, there were three thousand Christian captives and some Moorish Christians. Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., III, p. 466, note 1.

treaty was concluded whereby French consuls were to reside in the trading towns and the Capuchins, as chaplains to the consuls, were to be free to minister to the Christians.[23] The French mission, however, did not long survive, owing to political troubles between Morocco and France ; but in 1644 Spanish Capuchins were at work in several of the coast towns under the protection of Spain. Morocco did not welcome Christians except as slaves or redeemable captives.

About the same time that the second missionary contingent was sent to Morocco, two Norman Capuchins were sent to explore the coast of Africa in those parts, generally known as Nigritia or Guinea, lying between Cape Verde and Benin. Their report,[24] as to the docile character of the natives, induced Propaganda in 1634 to commission the Capuchin Provincial of Brittany to send missionaries to those parts. In 1637 four Capuchins arrived at Besné and were well received by the king of the district and the chiefs, who professed themselves willing to receive instruction in the Christian Faith. A rustic oratory was built and the natives attended mass and in course of time many of the notable men received baptism. The mission flourished, notwithstanding trouble caused by the Dutch traders. Later, the Spanish Capuchins came to the aid of their French brethren whose resources were overtaxed by the vast missionary enterprises upon which they had embarked. In 1644 the mission was committed to the care of the Capuchins of Andalusia.

From the Nigritia mission sprang yet another mission, not in Africa but in Brazil. The trade route usually followed between Europe and Central Africa, went across the seas to Brazil and back to the African coast. That was the route generally taken by the missionaries. Some Breton Capuchins on their way to Guinea in 1534 were captured by the Dutch and held as prisoners in Brazil. There they carried on the

[23] Père Joseph's instructions to the missionaries sent to Morocco in 1630 are interesting. The missionaries were not to meddle in the internal politics of Morocco nor in political affairs between Morocco and foreign countries ; moreover, they were not to irritate the Moors by invective against the Koran. Francois d'Angers, op. cit., p. 167, *seq.*

[24] Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., III, p. 487, *seq.* cf. *Relation du voyage du Cap, Vert, fait par le pere Alexis de S. Lo et le pere Bernardin de Renouard, Capucins* (Rouen, 1637).

work of their ministry amongst the Catholics. From that enforced residence grew up a mission station and in 1642 Propaganda formally created a Capuchin mission with its centre at Pernambuco, to be attached to the French province of Brittany. From Pernambuco the mission within a few years stretched out to Bahia and Rio de Janeiro.

In the meantime a new and vast mission was undertaken south of the missions in Nigritia, but of this we shall speak later. It did not come within the scheme of missions planned by Père Joseph. For the moment we will follow the French Capuchins in their new missions in North America.[25]

In 1630, Père Joseph was commissioned by the Congregation of Propaganda to send French and English Capuchins to New England," to aid the Catholics and impede the progress of the Puritans."[26] The need of sending missions to the new British colonies in North America had been vehemently urged on Propaganda since 1625 by the Carmelite Simon Stock ; and the matter was taken up by the nuncio in Belgium who urged that suitable missionaries might be found amongst the English exiles in the Low Countries. Propaganda first approached the Jesuits on the subject and then the Capuchins. In fact, however, the first Capuchins sent out by Père Joseph in 1632 were sent to New France, the French possessions, and not to New England. They were destined to open a mission in Quebec ; but on arriving there, they found the Jesuits in possession and amicably relinquished their claim. They were then sent with the approval of Propaganda to Acadie where they replaced the Recollect Franciscans.[27] Their first hospice was at Port Royal, from which they went forth to minister to the French Catholics and to the native Indians. Schools were established where the Indian children were cared for and instructed ; mission stations spread rapidly, the missionaries dwelling amongst the natives. At the same time churches were served in the towns of the French colonists. Acadie became a model missionary province. Everything went well until in 1654 the English burst in upon the province and wrought desolation.

[25] *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, VII, p. 223, *seq.* Rocco de Cesinale, III, p. 693, *seq.*

[26] *Acta S. C. de Prop. Fide*, Nov. 22, 1630, in Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., III, p. 675. Candide de Nant: *Pages glorieuses de l'Epopee Canadienne*, op. cit., p. 100.

[27] Concerning the Capuchin mission in Acadie see the scholarly work, already referred to, of Père Candide de Nant.

The churches were destroyed, the colonists massacred, and the missionaries banished together with a large part of the French population. The Capuchin superior of the mission, Léonard de Chartres, who had refused to leave his post at Port Royal when the English advanced, was murdered. That destruction of the peaceful colony of Acadie is one of the black pages in the history of English Puritanism. Capuchin missionaries, however, were yet to be found amongst the native Indians.[28]

From Canada the Capuchins in 1642 had extended their labours to Maine and Maryland ; thirty years later they were working in Florida.

Meanwhile, in 1636, six Capuchins from Normandy had been sent with that bluff adventurer on the seas, Pierre Belain d'Esnambuc, to evangelise the new French colony in the Antilles, where they were to work side by side with the Jesuits and Dominicans. The headquarters of this mission was in the isle of Saint-Christophe. From there the mission extended to Guadaloupe, Granada, Martinique and San Domingo.

It is in this mission that we again meet with Père Pacifique de Provins. In 1642, four years after the death of Père Joseph, Pacifique was appointed prefect of the Capuchin missions in Canada. He does not seem ever to have gone to Canada. He was in Rome in 1643 and the following year, on business connected with the mission. In 1645 he was in the Antilles which were included in his prefecture. The fact is that Père Pacifique had his dreams, even as Père Joseph had ; and it was these dreams that took him to Rome. For one thing, he wished to establish a missionary seminary in Paris for the training of missionaries, and in this project he was promised the aid of the duc de Vendôme. Then too he was anxious to found a " milice chrétienne " for the aid of missions in all parts of the world, a dream realised two centuries later by the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. Neither of these projects came to anything so far as Père Pacifique was concerned. When at length he arrived in the Antilles, he did in fact contribute to the foundation of an Indian school at Port Royal ; but his pet wish was to

[28] See the report of the mission sent to Propaganda in 1656 by P. Ignace de Paris, in Candide de Nant, op. cit., Appendice I, p. 305, *seq.*

found a seminary for native missionaries in the Ile des Saints. His own companion was a native Capuchin who had been ordained priest in France. One can understand something of Père Joseph's refusal to employ Pacifique on the missions after his return from Persia. One dreamer of dreams is not usually tolerant of another in the active affairs of life, at least not when their paths cross. Notwithstanding his ambitious projects, Pacifique was a good practical missionary in the ordinary affairs of a missionary's life. He was fearless of danger. His last adventure was an attempt to convert the cannibal Caribbeans ; and it was in this adventure that he lost his life. He had received warning of the treachery of these natives in the fate of others who had ventured amongst them. But no warning of danger would deter Pacifique. How he died no one knows. He just disappeared.[29] He had been three years in the Antilles. Like his *Voyage en Perse* his book on the Antilles is the work of a keen and joyous observer.[30] Pacifique loved the souls of his fellowmen; but he had, too, a Franciscan love of the earth he lived on and a naïve enjoyment of the beautiful ; a sturdy man with the heart and generous impulse of the child.

(iii)

The creation and organisation of the French Capuchin missions was undoubtedly the noblest effort of Père Joseph's genius; it was the work of a master-mind and of an indomitable will. Nor was the achievement in any way ephemeral ; it developed and gathered force during the century that followed his death, and was checked only by the great revolution.

Yet simultaneously with the development of foreign-missionary activity amongst the French friars there was a similar development in other provinces of the Order, particularly in Italy and Spain. In fact the missionary spirit in Spain and in some of the Italian provinces almost rivalled

[29] It is generally stated that he died in 1653 ; but in 1649 Propaganda was considering the appointment of a new prefect of the mission, "owing to the death of Père Pacifique." cf. Candide de Nant, op. cit., p. 218.

[30] *Relation ou description des iles Saint Christophe*, etc., (see *supra*, p. 378).

that in France. Before the middle of the century Italian Capuchins were working in Tunis, Algiers, in the Caucasus and together with their Spanish brethren, in Central Africa; whilst purely Spanish missions were to be found in Morocco and in South America.

No finer story of persistent effort and heroic labour is to be found in the annals of the foreign missions than that of the Spanish-Italian missions in that vast region of Central Africa which stretches behind the coast line from Benin to Angola, and is known in Capuchin history as the Congo mission.[31] This mission was first planned and committed to the Capuchins by Paul V in 1620. The creation of the mission was the Pope's response to a petition for missionaries sent by Alvarez II, King of the Congo. Some time before this Catholic missionaries had visited the Kingdom; Alvarez himself was a professed Catholic ; and here and there churches had been erected but were now derelict. Paul V died before the commission could be executed ; but it was renewed by Gregory XV immediately after his election. Then had come news of the death of Alvarez and political events intervened to prevent the mission being sent. Not until nineteen years later, and at the renewed entreaties of Alvarez's successor, did Urban VIII actually despatch four Capuchins under the leadership of Fra Bonaventura d'Alessano. Their first objective was Lisbon, where they must obtain the consent of the Spanish King, within whose sphere of influence as sovereign of Portugal the Congo lay. They arrived to find themselves in the midst of the revolution which was to make Portugal again independent of the crown of Spain; and the Portuguese, suspicious of some political design in favour of Spain, refused to allow the missionaries to proceed ; and these had no other course but to return to

[31] For the Congo Mission see *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, 193-218. Giovanni Antonio Cavazzi da Montecuccolo : *Istoria descritta de'tre regni, Congo, Matamba et Angola ;* Dionigi Carli da Piacenza : *Il Moro Transportato in Venezia : overo Racconto dei Costumi . . . dei popoli del' Africa, America, Asia ed Europe* (Bassano, (1687). Girolamo Merolla da Sorrento : *Relatione del viaggio nel regno di Congo* Napoli, 1692). (An English translation of Carli and Merolla appeared in *A Collection of Voyages and Travels* . . . in 4 volumes. London. Printed for Awnsham and John Churchill at the Black Swan, in Paternoster Row, 1704 ; vol. i, pp. 611-766.)

Giovanni Francesco da Roma : *Breve Relazione del successo della Missione dei Cappuccini al Regno del Congo* (Roma, 1648). cf. Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., III, pp. 517-672.

Rome. There followed a further delay of six years during which affairs between Spain and Portugal had come to a settlement. In 1644 the Pope again took the matter of the mission in hand and committed the charge of it to the Procurator-General of the Order.[32] Again political difficulties arose—the Catholic powers, however zealous they might be for the propagation of the Faith, were nevertheless more anxious that the Faith should not be propagated except to their own political advantage. Fortunately for the mission, one of their company, a lay brother, Fray Francisco de Pampelona—for the missionaries now were a mixed company of Italians and Spaniards—intervened with the Spanish and Portuguese powers. Fray Francisco de Pampelona had once been a captain in the army of Spain and was a man of good family. His influence and address won the consent of the King of Spain, and at the beginning of 1645 the missionaries set sail for the Congo, taking the usual route by the Canaries and Brazil—a journey of some months. They arrived in the Congo in May. In reciting the history of the Congo mission one would hesitate to put down the details of the successes gained were it not that the story is so well documented by the reports of eye-witnesses at various times and in various parts. Within one week of landing the Capuchins baptised one thousand five hundred natives who had been waiting for baptism. Yet that number pales before the numbers baptised as the missionaries spread themselves abroad. One missionary alone, Bonaventura da Sorrento, in the course of a missionary tour, baptised twelve thousand persons, adults and children.

At one moment, shortly after the arrival of the mission, it seemed as though it were once again doomed, owing to sickness. All the missionaries fell grievously sick ; one of them died, and Fra Bonaventura d'Alessano, the superior, was the only one of the company able to rise from his bed to administer the viaticum to the dying friar. Hardly were they recovered, when those who were able to travel set out on the journey to San Salvador, the capital, to visit the King, Garcia II. For six days they journeyed without seeing a single human habitation. Garcia received them graciously and gave them the derelict church dedicated to our Lady of

[32] cf. Rocco da Cesinale, op. cit., III, p. 527, note 2.

Victory. The following year a fresh contingent joined the missionaries ; though not without trouble from the Dutch traders at Loanda, who for a time imprisoned them and endeavoured to raise the natives against them by spreading the rumour that the missionaries were Spanish soldiers in disguise. Two years later a further contingent of fourteen Spanish and Italian friars arrived.

The missionaries spread themselves over the country, instructing and baptising. Mingled with the prevalent idolatry and superstition were recollections of the Catholic Faith as taught by former missionaries. The greatest difficulty encountered was the custom of polygamy ; and no little embarrassment occurred when the baptised native must determine which of his former wives he would marry ; nor was it easy to prevent lapses in favour of the larger domestic establishment. At times whole districts were baptised. At Sundi, when the missionary arrived, people from all the neighbouring country came begging for baptism. One of the notable conversions was that of the vassal reigning-princess, Queen Singa. She was of Ethiopian origin and had become a Christian in her youth, but out of hatred of the Portuguese had lapsed into idolatry. That notable missionary, Fra Antonio da Gaeta, reconciled her to the Church, and baptised over eight thousand of her people, not including infants.[33]

But the success attending the labours of the Capuchins in the Congo and its adjoining territories was paid for at a great price. The long journeys over vast tracts of country, the tropical heat, the native food and climatic conditions took a large toll of life amongst the missionaries ; and their sufferings were added to by their persistent endeavour to observe the Rule and Constitutions of their Reform in all its severity. The wearing of their coarse habit, as one of the chroniclers says, was a continual martyrdom under the

[33] See *La maravigliosa conversione alla santa fede di Cristo della Regina Singa e del suo regno di Matamba nell' Africa meridionale : descritta con historico stile da P. F. Francesco Maria Gioia da Napoli detto da Posilipo . . . E cavata da una Relatione del la mandata dal P. F. Antonio da Gaeta . . . missionario apostolico e Prefetto Generale della Missione ne' Regni dell' Africa, e di detta Regina da lui convertata* (In Napoli, 1669).

Incidentally P. Gioia gives a vivid description of the manners and customs of the country.

cf. *Bull. Ord. Cap.*, VII, pp. 201-203.

conditions of their life in the Congo ; yet in their spirit of austerity they would not change it for a lighter garb.[34] One may criticise their decision, yet it was the indomitable spirit which refused to accept ease of any sort which contributed to the success of the missionaries. And always the places of those who succumbed were taken by others in increasing numbers.

Almost in the same year that the Spanish and Italian missionaries first went to the Congo, the Propaganda called upon the Papal nuncio at Madrid to send four Capuchin priests with the lay-brother, Fray Francisco de Pampelona, to establish a mission at Darien in the West Indies. The nuncio was to negotiate with the Spanish Court not to put hindrances in the way of the mission, and to point out that as the country was rich in gold it was becoming to send religious there who were strangers to the love of riches.[35] The Fray Francisco mentioned in the decree was he who had so valiantly cleared the way for the mission to the Congo. He was to play no small part in the development of the new mission in Central America. The missionaries actually reached Panama in 1648, and then they were six in number, not five. The country was wild and desolate, the Indians living scattered in the mountains and forests. It was at first literally a going forth into the highways and byways to find their flock ; and a patient campaign of winning kindness to dispel the native fear of the European. But in a few months the missionaries were able to form a village with a church in the centre as the symbol of the law of the Gospel by which the life of the village was to be ruled ; this village was named San Buonventura. Shortly afterwards a second village was formed ; and these became the centres of missionary activity. The following year Fray Francisco went back to Spain to enlist a new band of missionaries. Whilst he was away, war broke out between the tribes ; the villages were destroyed and the Capuchins taken prisoners. When peace was restored, the work had to be begun over again. Then the superior, Antonio de Oviedo, taking with him three or four converted natives, set out to evangelise the Bogoti Indians in what is now Columbia. But the native Christians on nearing

34 Dionigi Carli, op. cit., I, p. 81.
35 *Bull. Ord. Cap.*, VII, pp. 337-8.

the territory of the Bogoti, turned back and fled. Antonio proceeded alone, carrying his crucifix in his hand. At his first encounter with the Bogoti, he was set upon and slain. Such was the beginning of what was known as the Orinoco mission which shortly extended over what is now known as the Isthmus of Panama, Venezuela and Columbia. Fray Francisco on his return to Darien in 1650 with another band of missionaries, went to evangelise the islands and coast south of the Orinoco. Villages were formed and churches erected ; it was a veritable Christian colonisation that these missionaries attempted. Then suddenly, in 1652, came messages from Madrid, condemning the work and recalling the missionaries. The Indian converts were thunderstruck and loudly petitioned that their Fathers should not be taken from them. The superior of the mission chose Fray Francisco to go to Madrid to make a true report of the work the missionaries were doing. He set out again on the long journey, but at Guayra off Caraccas, he fell sick and died. He died as he would have wished, as a soldier on active duty. Then Propaganda took the matter up. The Capuchins were bidden to remain at their post, and a further band of missionaries were sent to their aid. And amongst these missionaries was one whose name was long to be cherished in Spain, particularly amongst the people of Andalusia, Fray Josè de Carabantes.

Fray Josè was one of the elect who are not to be judged according to the limitations which dim the spiritual sight of the ordinary man. From his childhood he had that perception of the spiritual mysteries which lie beyond our earthly vision, such as is given only to the purest souls ; a mystic, yet a mystic whose book lies in the service of his fellow men. Some there are to whom the mystical life reveals itself in solitude : Fray Josè found heaven revealed in active service. Not that he made a heaven of active service as is not uncommon amongst men ; but active service with him was swathed in the light that comes from beyond. And this same spiritual light shone forth from him, as sometimes the inner purity of a man irradiates his countenance. At times men looked on him and were abashed by the radiant spirituality that they saw in him. He was not long at Darien when he was drawn to those fiercest and wildest tribes, the

Caribbeans—those who had done to death Père Pacifique de Provins. And if he hated all white men, the Caribbean hated most of all the Spaniard. Yet Fray Josè tamed them, and in his ten years work amongst them, baptised over ten thousand of them. His achievement was crystallised into a phrase : " the war between the Caribbean and the Spaniard is ended." It was his luminous spirituality which tamed them. At times when he preached to them, it seemed as though horns of light radiated from his countenance ; his very words seemed streams of stars. His great charity alone would have failed before their suspicion and distrust ; but charity from this almost superhuman being as they regarded him, conquered them. So they gathered into his villages and welcomed him in their habitations in the wild, as a servant of God ; and for his sake accepted the Spanish padres, his confrères, and looked with a new sight upon Spaniards generally, because they were his countrymen. Five of the tribes became wholly Catholic In 1566, he was commissioned by the five chiefs to go to Rome to present to the Pope an address of loyalty and of gratitude for the Catholic Faith they had received through their Capuchin Fathers, " God's ministers, who are poor even as we are poor."[36] The Pope received Fray Josè with the honours given a royal ambassador ; it was his benediction on the work this wonderful friar had accomplished. Fray Josè did not return to his Indians. On his way back he fell sick in Spain, and was detained there by his superiors. He lived for another twenty-five years and by his evangelistic work gained the appellation of "the apostle of Galicia." There, too, as amongst the Indians, it was his radiating spirituality which compelled the rebellious wills to bow before the Gospel he preached. Even before his death he was acclaimed " the Saint."[37]

Thus by the middle of the seventeenth century were Capuchin missionaries scattered wide from Constantinople to India, from Egypt to Morocco, and from Guinea to Angola, from the Saint Lawrence in Canada to the wilds of Southern Brazil ; and this widespread enterprise had been

[36] cf. *Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, VII, p. 339.

[37] cf. Silvestro da Milano : *Vita del Venerabile Padre Giuseppe da Carabantes, missionario apostolico* (Milano, 1737) ; Rocco de Cesinale, op. cit., III, p. 719, *seq.*

achieved within twenty-five years, and at a time when in almost every country in Europe Capuchin missionaries were carrying out an intensive campaign for the restoration of the Catholic Faith. The story of those early foreign missions is the story of an infectious heroic enthusiasm. Here we have but touched lightly upon it, giving but a mere indication of what was accomplished and but a fleeting glance at the characters of a few of the leaders in the enterprise. And, as we have said, their work was only the foundation of a yet more widespread and intensive missionary campaign in the years that followed.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CAPUCHINS MAKE LITERATURE

(i)

An observer with the gift of vision, taking note of the Capuchin Reform in the days of its early struggles, would probably have concluded that the new congregation must either develop on wider lines than those it immediately mapped out for itself in its infancy, or quickly fall back into the very ineptitude against which it was a reaction. The question was : would the ideal of a spiritual renovation with which the Reform undoubtedly began, degenerate into that of a mere moral reformation supported by an external law, as happens to so many reforms ? Were this to happen the Capuchin Reform would be doomed, for no man long endures an austere code when the spirit is quenched.

But a spiritual renovation necessarily embarks on a long quest, the experiences of which no man can foretell. It cannot say to itself : thus far will I go and no further ; for if it does, it at once denies the sovereignty of the spirit and becomes the slave of the letter that kills. So it is that every spiritual renovation, if it is to maintain itself, must be an ever expanding activity of the spirit seeking new conquests.

With the Capuchins it was the spirit of evangelical poverty as captured by St. Francis which was the thing that mattered: so long as that spirit remained intact as the spring of their activity and enthusiasm they had a purpose to live for and a distinctive character which would give them a place in the world. They might live in wattle huts and eat the bread of the poorest of the poor, they might go barefoot and wear the coarsest garb ; but were they to idolise these external conditions whilst they let the spirit within them languish for lack of its proper food, theirs would be no true poverty as St. Francis visioned it. Behind the material poverty must be

the freedom of the spirit to capture the world for Christ the Redeemer, the divine Exemplar of the gospel of Franciscan poverty.

Hence it was to be expected that the Capuchin congregation, if it developed at all, would hold surprises for those who could see nothing beyond the mountain hermitage of Albacina, and the service of the sick in the Spedale San Giacomo. Perhaps the biggest surprise would be—could it have been foreseen—not the development of the preaching missions and the evangelisation of the infidels—some foreshadowing of that was Matteo da Bascio himself; but the intellectual and literary development within the congregation.

Here I need not pause to argue with the contention of some that the Franciscan life, as designed by St. Francis, had no place for learning or acquired knowledge.[1] This only need be said here, that if the life of poverty had no benediction for the activity of the mind and the beauty of thought, it were no true gospel of life. Any creed which kills thought, or atrophies the mind, is self-condemned. It may ban existing systems or schools, but only to set the mind free; and in proportion as it holds the secret of life it will itself become the spring of a new and vigorous intellectual activity. In fact in banning "the curiosities of knowledge," as he well termed it, St. Francis more or less unconciously gave the specific principle which later governed the vigorous thinking of the Franciscan School.

Nevertheless, to the superficial observer, seeing that the Capuchins in their first reaction to gain the primitive Franciscan spirit, banned the scholastic training in vogue at the time, the emergence of a well-defined intellectual activity may well have been amongst the surprises of Capuchin developments. Yet hardly had the Reform taken root when it became apparent that vigorous thinking went with the rigorous austerity of the Capuchin friary. And this may have been noticed—how largely the Reform was recruited from amongst those of trained intellect and scholastic attainments; and how it was amongst these that the Reform found its pillars of support and its leaders, from the beginning

[1] cf. my *Life of Saint Francis of Assisi*, Book III, chap. vii, and *The Romanticism of Saint Francis*, VII.

and throughout the period of the Counter-Reformation. To these the simplicity and sincerity of the Capuchin life brought their thought into touch with reality. When Franciscus Titelmann, the brilliant opponent of Erasmus, was nursing the sick in the hospital of San Giacomo, being then a Capuchin novice, a friend of his earlier days remarked that he would be better employed with his books. Franciscus pointed to the patients he was nursing and replied ; " here are my books : I desire none better." He was but one of the many who have found stronger food for thought in the hard facts of life than in the theorising of the schools. To keep close to the realities, that was the prime principle which underlay the Capuchin ban on scholastic studies in the first days of the Reform. Yet that very principle held in itself the seed of an intellectual development which must come about if there were real life in the new congregation. No man can live vigorously without ordered thought, and as that thought is built up by experience it must expand and find expression—or the life itself will die. So are men made.

It would indeed have been an almost inconceivable thing, seeing that these Capuchins were men at once of a contemplative and of an active cast of mind, had they not been concerned with the problems of the mind to which their intense life and broad sympathies must eventually lead them ; unless, indeed, they lost their hold on the life itself. That their hold on their visioned life was strong and vigorous during the period of which we are treating, will not be denied by those who have read these pages.

Their first essays in speculation dealt with what was to them the fundamental problem of practical religion—the way of the mystical union between God and man. They began where most speculation ends, if ever it gets so far. The first book written by a Capuchin was the *Operetta devotissima* of Fra Giovanni da Fano wherein he sets forth a method by which man's soul may become united with God.[2] Fra

[2] *Operetta devotissima : chiamata Arte de la Unione laquale insegna unire l'anima con Dio* (Bressa, 1536). A unique copy of the first edition is in the British Museum. A second edition was published in 1548. In 1622 the work was re-edited by Fra Dionisio da Montefaleo with the title : *L'Arte d'unirsi con Dio del R. P. F. Giovanni da Fano Predicator Capuccino* (Roma, 1622). Fra Dionisio exercised his editorial authority with great freedom. He largely re-wrote the text to invest

Giovanni on joining the Capuchins in 1534 was sent to the friary of Scandriglia where " he dwelt in a small cell in a wood apart." Whilst there he wrote his book.[3] Giovanni's treatise is eminently practical ; it is not a book to read unless you yourself are seeking actual guidance in the way of prayer. The style, as Fra Dionisio remarks, is not attractive. Giovanni draws much from masters who had preceded him, but he takes what he considers of direct practical utility for the beginner ; his is a book such as one might expect from a practical director of souls ; only it is evident that in his solitary's cell Giovanni was mapping out anew the path he himself would follow with a reborn fervour. Two years later, when he was on a preaching tour in Northern Italy, he put the treatise into the hands of a publisher, deeming that it might be helpful " not only to religious but even to spiritual and devout seculars." And that was the beginning of the Capuchin apostolate of teaching the world to pray. Other and greater masters in the art of contemplation, more persuasive teachers, were to come later ; but none perhaps more clearly and simply marked out the common way. For the next century and a half the Capuchins were amongst the foremost teachers of the art of contemplative prayer ; the greater number of their published books were either treatises on the art itself, or devotional works dealing with the mysteries of our Lord's life and passion, or with the articles of the Catholic Faith in meditative form. Most of these books, as we have elsewhere remarked, were written by the preachers, and embodied the instructions or meditations given as part of the regular mission course. Of similar origin were many of their polemical books dealing with the heretical teachings of the day. One of the earliest of these popular polemical treatises was that of Fra Bernardino da Balbano—a famous preacher in his day, who died about 1560—on the subject of predestination and free-will.[4]

it with a more elegant style, and interlarded the text with quotations from the Fathers and Scripture in the approved style of earlier medieval writers. Dionisio had been a cardinal's secretary before he became a Capuchin. See the excellent analysis of the work *De Arte Unionis cum Deo . . . breviter disserit P. Fredigandus ab Antuerpia* (Romae, 1924).

3 Bernardino da Colpetrazzo, op. cit., II, p. 695.

4 cf. *Bibliot. Script. Ord. Cap.*, op. cit., p. 43 ; Salvatore da Valenzano : *I Cappuccini nelle Puglie*, op. cit., pp. 66 and 282. Giovanni da Fano wrote against the teaching of Luther, but before he joined the Capuchins.

Another Italian preacher, Fra Girolamo da Dinami, published in 1566 a volume of sermons on the same subject preached the year before in the church of Santi Apostoli, Venice.[5] Evidently the doctrine of Luther and Calvin was still a matter to be dealt with in parts of Italy. It was, however, not until the Capuchins crossed the Alps that they developed a large polemical and controversial literature, the result of their closer contact with militant Protestantism.

Meanwhile the decrees of the Council of Trent, and in fact the very necessity of the case, had forced the Capuchins to establish formal courses of study for those destined to the priesthood and the office of preaching. At first the need for formal studies had not been felt, notwithstanding the widespread evangelistic activities to which the congregation was committed. A large number of those who joined the Reform in the earlier days, perhaps the majority, were already priests ; many were theologians of distinction ; and there was no lack of men capable of giving individual tuition to those who had not yet made their theological studies. But gradually, it would seem, informal classes were formed in certain friaries in each province under the direction of an expert theologian. Thus Mattia da Salò, who became a Capuchin in 1551, studied at Naples under Fra Girolamo da Pistoia and afterwards at Foligno under Fra Girolamo da Montefiore. Mattia himself after his ordination was successively lector in the provinces of Umbria, Naples and Brescia.[6] There was a class of theological students in the friary of Gravina in Apulia in 1553 when the Minister Provincial inculcated upon the students the duty of advancing in the love of virtue and of knowledge.[7] The method of teaching would seem to have been tutorial ; no general system was followed ; much depended upon the particular scholastic training of the lector. Girolamo da Montefiore before he became a Capuchin was a Scotist theologian of repute. But it is evident from the writings of the men who were thus educated, that their theological training was chiefly based upon the Scriptures and the Fathers of the Church ; and it

5 *Bibliot. Script. Ord. Cap.*, op. cit., p. 118.

6 Valdimiro da Bergamo : *Biografia e Bibliografia del P. Mattia da Salò* in *Miscellanea Franc., anno* III, fasc. 1, p. 22 ; *I Cappuccini Bresciani*, p. 214.

7 Salvatore da Valenzano, op. cit., p. 278.

is further evident even in those earlier days, that a certain proficiency was required in the knowledge of Hebrew, Syriac and Greek, to enable the student to study the Scriptures in their original texts.[8] The "profane" sciences were not studied in the Order as part of the priest's training; but no small number of the future priests had been educated in the higher schools and universities; and from the time of the General Chapter of 1549 no novice might be received as a cleric unless he were sufficiently educated to proceed to the study of theology.[9] There is evidence, too, that these previous studies were not altogether laid aside after the novice had entered the Order, but were brought into the study of theology and used as in the best days of medieval learning, as ancillary aids to the study of the Scriptures. Mattia da Salò for instance, certainly did not forget his classical training. Fra Matteo da Leonessa, who was a doctor of medicine, with a physician's appreciation of physical suffering wrote a treatise upon the sufferings of Christ.[10] Fra Lodovico da Filicaia told the story of the Gospels in verse after the style of Petrarch.[11] Fra Alessandro da Bologna wrote on mathematics and natural science.[12]

But the decrees of the Council of Trent at length compelled the Capuchins to organise their studies upon more formal lines; and in 1567 the General Chapter decreed the establishment of what seems to have been a higher seminary for the more efficient training of lectors. The scholarly Fra Girolamo da Pistoia was appointed lector-general to direct the school.[13] It was first established in Rome; a few years later it was removed to Genoa.[14] The es-

[8] Mattia da Salò was sent to Rome to study and acquire proficiency in these languages. cf. Valdimiro da Bergamo, loc. cit., Fra Ignazio d'Apiro, died 1569, wrote fluently in Hebrew and Greek. *Bibliot. Script. Ord. Cap.*, p. 188.

[9] *Anal. Ord. Cap.*, V, pp. 74-75.

[10] *Bibliot. Script. Ord. Cap.*, p. 188. According to P. Claude de Bourges in his *chronologicum*, Bernardino d'Asti wished to establish a *studium generale* at Milan under the direction of Franciscus Titelmann; but this is very doubtful in view of Bernardino's known attitude as related by his secretary, Bernardino da Colpetrazzo. cf. Hilarinus Felder, *Die studien in Ersten Jahrhundert des Kapuzinerordens* in *Liber Memorialis Ord. Min. Cap.* (Roma, 1928), pp. 92-94.

[11] cf. Sisto da Pisa: *Storia dei Cappuccini Toscani*, I, p. 126-127.

[12] *Bibliot. Script. Ord. Cap.*, p. 3. His treatises were published posthumously at Venice in 1586.

[13] cf. *supra*, vol. I, chap. vi.

[14] cf. Boverius, *Annales, anno* 1567; *Anal. Ord. Cap.*, V, p. 81.

tablishment of this school was of prime importance to the next half-century ; for Fra Girolamo, as we have already pointed out, based his teaching upon the long neglected doctrine of St. Bonaventura and inculcated the Bonaventuran method, thus definitely parting company with the Scotists and the later scholastics. It meant a reversion to the earlier Franciscan tradition and to the purer Franciscan thought. The Bonaventuran influence at once made itself felt ; it gave the Capuchins a natural medium of thought and a direction wholly in harmony with the fundamental idealism of the congregation, and thus undoubtedly contributed to the more intense intellectual development which now set in. For no man can work freely and with a sure touch, no man can work creatively and with perfect sincerity, within any system which is not intimately expressive of his own life-purpose. It was, therefore, of momentous importance to the Capuchins that their speculative thought should seek direction at the purest fount of Franciscan speculation if they were to escape that discord between intellectual and practical life which eventually leads both to moral and intellectual weakness. Even before the establishment of the *studium generale* certain Capuchin leaders had begun to base their teaching on the doctrine of St. Bonaventura ; for instance in the friary of Genoa, Maurice de Chambéry, in 1565, had lectured on the four books of the Sentences of the Seraphic doctor.[15] Moreover, there is evidence that the Capuchins generally were enthusiastic students of the works of the first Franciscan master.[16] Nevertheless, Fra Girolamo da Pistoia deserved well of the Capuchin Reform when, as first lector-general, he set before his students the method and teaching of the Seraphic doctor as the foundation of their scholastic training. If the Capuchins must have schools it was well that their thought should

[15] *Bibliot. Script. Ord. Cap.*, op. cit., p. 189.

[16] Thus, P. Antonio Pozzi, O. M. Convent, in the preface to his edition of St. Bonaventura's commentaries on the sentences of Peter Lombard, published at Rome in 1569, states that he was enabled to bring out his work owing to the munificence of Pius V, and the assistance given him by the Capuchins, particularly Girolamo da Pistoja. "*Munificentia et liberalitate S. D. N. Pii V, necnon solertia congregationis Fratrum Capucinorum praesertim Fratris Hieronymi Pistoriensis.*" Again he refers to the Capuchins : "*Patres ordinis Capucinorum D. Francisci Patris nostri, sancti Bonaventurae doctrinae ac morum alumni.*"

be directed in conformity with the underlying principles of their practical life.

(ii)

Hardly do I venture to speak of a Capuchin School ; for the more remarkable of the Capuchin thinkers, whilst bearing a kinship of character and mental outlook, were yet each of too individual a quality to form a school, at least in the narrower sense of the word. The Bonaventuran tradition was to the Capuchins what neo-platonism was to the Fathers of the Church, a mental atmosphere and mode of expression ; it never became a system in the sense in which one speaks of the Thomist or Scotist systems. But that, perhaps, was as much due to the Bonaventuran method itself as to the particular quality of the Capuchin mind. Bonaventura's thought always ends in a wistful acknowledgment of mystery beyond the attempted topical explanation, for the simple reason that it searches for vision and experience rather than the logical truth ; its quest is the satisfying good in life. In such a quest one may be given direction, but the results of the quest will mainly depend on the individual thinker's character and thirst for experience. The Bonaventuran mind is perhaps more a nursery of individual thinkers rather than of a logical system of thought.

It was precisely as individual thinkers under the influence of the Bonaventuran tradition, and not as the exponents of a system, that the Capuchins in the Counter-Reformation period did their best work and in not a few instances attained to undeniable authority in the intellectual life of the time. And this is the more noticeable since the attempt on the part of some of their theological teachers to create a Bonaventuran school on the conventional scholastic lines proved a failure and (notwithstanding the continual injunctions of General Chapters) eventually led to the practical elimination of the Bonaventuran method from the curriculum of formal studies in the Capuchin congregation, with disastrous consequences to its intellectual life.

Of the rise and ultimate failure of this attempted School

I can but give the briefest outline ; nor can I do more than tentatively surmise the causes of its failure.[17]

Towards the end of the sixteenth century a Spanish Capuchin, Pedro de Calatjud, commonly known as Petrus Trigosius, attempted a complete synthesis of the dogmatic theology of the Seraphic doctor. Pedro de Calatjud had been a Jesuit before he joined the Capuchins and was already a theologian of some repute. His synthesis, which he did not live to bring to completion, would have been a voluminous work. Of the four parts which he had already prepared, only the first part was published in 1593, the year of his death.[18]

The example set by Pedro de Calatjud was followed by a number of Capuchin lectors. But a quarter of a century later a new note appears in these Bonaventuran expositors. They are—most of them—no longer whole-hearted disciples of the early Franciscan tradition. The logical clarity of St. Thomas has made them somewhat restive as against the heart-groping of St. Bonaventura. They still teach the Bonaventuran doctrine but are at pains to assimilate it with that of the great Dominican. With this purpose, Francesco Longo da Coregliano in 1622 published his *Summa theologica*[19] and Teodoro Foresti da Bergamo in 1633 a treatise on the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity.[20]

But perhaps the most ambitious and successful attempt to reduce St. Bonaventura to a logical system was that of Teodoro's gifted disciple, Marcantonio Galizio da Carpenedolo, a versatile genius and one of the most lovable and generous of men.[21] To know Marcantonio Galizio one

[17] A definitive judgment would require a far more intimate study of the works of the Capuchin expositors of the doctrine of St. Bonaventura than I have been able to undertake. Perhaps some day a competent scholar will give attention to Bonaventuran studies in the Capuchin congregation. I believe the study would repay patient investigation.

[18] cf. *Biblioth. Script. Ord. Cap.*, p. 214. Boverius, *Annales*, *anno* 1593, 83. It is curious that the Capuchin chroniclers record practically nothing of Trigosius beyond his writings. d'Aremberg (*Flores Seraphici*, II, p. 416) devotes four lines to him, Boverius little more.

[19] *Sancti Bonaventurae summa theologica ad instar summae Divi Thomae Aquinatis* (Romae, 1622). cf. *Annales, Cap.*, Appendix ad t. III, *anno* 1625 ; *Bibl. Script. Ord. Cap.*, p. 94.

[20] *De Almae ac sanctissimae Trinitatis mysterio juxta mentem S. Bonaventurae conciliatam ubique cum S. Thomae sententia* (Romae, 1633).

[21] cf. Valdimiro da Bergamo, *I Cappuccini Bresciani*, pp. 190-208.

must not fail to read his delightful prose song, *La Filomela*[22] written when he was still a young student ; and it will be well to read the narration of his " life, actions and death," compiled from records left by the two faithful companions of his later years[23]. There you have the man in his outlook on life and as he unconsciously revealed himself to those who knew him most intimately ; and the two documents are in harmony. To Marcantonio, as he reveals himself in *La Filomena*, life is a song, and the spiritual life a song of joy of the children of God, and this treatise on spiritual perfection and the means to attain to it (for such is *La Filomena*) is written with a lyrical feeling which proves its sincerity. Marcantonio was a precocious youth, and at heart never lost his youth. He was appointed to teach theology as soon as he had finished his own scholastic studies, and it was whilst teaching that he conceived the scheme of an entire course of theology based upon the teaching of St. Bonaventura. To the preparation of this work he brought a wide reading of the acknowledged masters of various schools, Thomist, Scotist, Averroist and Nominalist, also the works of Roger Bacon and the recent works of the Jesuits.[24] Also, and this was characteristic of the man, he trained his mind by daily manual work in the garden of the friary that he might not lose touch with the common life of the community. In 1532, when he was but thirty-three years of age, he was elected Minister Provincial and from that time he successively filled offices in the administration of the Order until he became Minister General in 1562. This continuous occupation in administrative affairs prevented him from carrying out his theological scheme in its entirety ; but in 1534 appeared his treatise on Dialectics; and in rapid succession during 1535 and 1536 he published four other volumes

[22] *La Filomela overo del Canto Spiritale ; libri quattro : ne' quale sotto metaforo di canto si da il modo di riuscire perfetto virtuoso e santo in ogni genere di virtu* (Milano, 1694).

[23] *Breve e succinta narratione della vita attioni e morte del M. R. P. Marc' Antonio Gallicio da Carpenedolo . . . estratta fedelmente da manuscritti e memorie lasciate dalli PP. Francesco da Dizenzano et Angelico da Carpenedolo che furono suvi compagni*, published together with La Filomela in 1694 and edited by Fra Andrea da Visano.

[24] *Summa totius Dialecticae : Litterae praeviae ad Ministrum Generale* (Roma, 1634).

treating of Physics, the Soul, and of Metaphysic.[25] We find him nearly thirty years later pleading with the Pope that he might be freed from all administrative offices, to allow him to finish the work which he had thus planned in early life ; but his pleading was in vain. At his death he left behind him a voluminous commentary on the four books of Sentences, probably written when he was still lecturing. Marcantonio's treatment of his subjects is vigorous and fresh ; had he been left free to guide the Capuchin schools he might have done much to develop the Bonaventuran teaching amongst the Capuchins in a manner which would have been at once free from exclusiveness and yet true to Bonaventuran principles. Thoroughly Bonaventuran in his own cast of mind, he could assimilate thought wherever he found it, and yet remain true to himself. It was not so with the lesser men.

But undoubtedly the greatest and most vigorous of the Capuchin scholastic thinkers formed in the Bonaventuran tradition[26] was Valeriano Magno—he whom we have already met in the hurly-burly of the religious struggle in Germany.[27] Valeriano Magno as a thinker stands apart from even the more gifted of the Capuchin scholastic teachers in the originality and penetration of his thought. Had he lived four centuries earlier he would have found his place amongst the foremost masters of the earlier Franciscan school with Adam Marsh and Roger Bacon. His mind was at one with theirs. But he was an early Franciscan schoolman born into the daybreak of the modern period ; and in his masterly development of early Franciscan teaching taking his place amongst the pioneers of modern philosophic thought. His metaphysical works and in particular his treatise *De luce mentium* form a bridge between the philosophic teaching of the Augustinian school as continued by St. Bonaventura and the beginnings of modern transcendental philosophy.[28] Like the early Franciscans, too, he devoted

[25] *Biblioth. Script. Ord. Cap.*, p. 179. For a complete list of Marcantonio's works see Valdimiro da Bergamo, op. cit., pp. 205-207.

[26] He says of himself : *Nos Capucini hunc doctorem* (*S. Bonaventuram*) *ad hibemus in instituendis junioribus ad pietatem et iisdem promovendis ad theologicam sapientiam* (*De Luce mentium* (Vienna, 1645), Cap. 24. He constantly refers to St. Augustine and St. Bonaventura as his masters. (cf. *ibid.*, cap. 23.)

[27] *Vide supra.*

[28] Christian Wolf : *Psychologia Empirica*, p. 1, sect. 2, cap. 2.

much thought to Natural Science ; he is said to have anticipated Herschell's theory of light.[29] As a polemical writer in defence of the Catholic Faith he was at once critical and appreciative. He never slurred over a difficulty in order to score a point.

He is a modern yet formed in medieval tradition. The wide range of his mental vision was that of the early scholastics ; with him as with them it might be said that all science was theology ; and as with the earlier Franciscan schoolmen, the base of his speculation was positive and experimental knowledge.[30] But Valeriano Magno had the magic gift of assimilating the wisdom of the past, of making it one with his own mind and endowing it with the note of his own personality—the gift of the original thinker who carries forward the world's thought. The marvel is that in his busy life as a preacher and man of affairs, he found time to produce and send forth such an amazing volume of philosophic work of a quality to compel attention. He must have been a prodigious worker as well as a man of overpowering personality. The sad thing is that he had no successor amongst those of his own religious Faith. Had it been otherwise, the gulf which has so long existed between Catholic philosophy and what is commonly known as modern thought might not have been so wide as it has been. Valeriano Magno points to what might have been had the Bonaventuran tradition been developed on broad lines in harmony with its own genius.

One might say that in Valeriano Magno the Capuchins had a unique opportunity of reinstating Bonaventuran teaching as a dynamic force in the intellectual world. That they did not seize the opportunity was due to many reasons. One honourable reason was that as a congregation their special genius turned more to practical thought than to purely speculative ; and but few men at any time can perceive the intimate relation of pure thought to practical life, or in dealing with pure thought retain their hold on the

[29] cf. Rocco da Casinale, op. cit., II, p. 670. The work referred to is a series of treatises under the title *Demonstratio ocularis loci sine locato*, published at Warsaw between 1647 and 1651.

[30] For a complete list of the works of Valeriano Magno cf. Valdimiro da Bergamo *I Cappuccini Milanesi*, parte 2a, vol. i, pp. 213-217. cf. *Bibl. Script. Ord. Cap.*, p. 241.

practical problems of life. As a body the Capuchins drew their more fruitful inspiration directly from the mystical teaching of St. Bonaventura in its application to practical life. Yet this must not blind us to the fact that the eventual failure of the Capuchin schools to re-establish the Bonaventuran tradition as a dynamic element in Catholic thought was also due to less defensible reasons, notably to that fateful attraction to the Dominican system which has so often deflected the Franciscan genius from its own proper path. Now it was the logical clarity of St. Thomas which drew the Capuchin lectors away from the Seraphic doctor to sit at the feet of St. Thomas. The right thing would have been to assimilate into Bonaventuran thought whatever is of helpful value in the Thomistic or any other school of thought ; as in fact was the intention of Teodoro Foresti and Marcantonio Galizio,[31] and as Valeriano Magno in fact did draw upon Thomistic doctrine. But amongst the lectors of lesser mental calibre there came a growing tendency to study St. Bonaventura in the light of St. Thomas, and to seek a justification of the Franciscan master in his real or supposed identity of doctrine with that of the great Dominican, until in the teaching of some of the expositors the distinction between Bonaventuran thought and Thomistic thought reached the vanishing point.[32] It was, of course, a futile conclusion in the face of history, and could only have been arrived at by a disregard of the fundamental character and mental processes of the Franciscan mind as interpreted by the Seraphic doctor. Bonaventuran theology in the hands of these expositors had degenerated from a study of the mind and thought of St. Bonaventura into a cataloguing of his conclusions and an attempt to explain them without regard to the source from which they came. From this to the practical elimination of Bonaventuran doctrine from the scholastic course was but another

[31] Galizio's fundamental sympathy with Valeriano Magno found expression in his defence of his confrere : *Responsio apologetica pro P. Valeriano Magno et sociis ejus cappuccinis*. cf. Valdimiro da Bergamo, *I Cappuccini Bresciani*, pp. 206-207.

[32] *e.g.* Bonaventura Lingonensis, the author of *Bonaventura Bonaventurae, scilicet Bonaventura et Thomas : sive summa theologica ex omnibus fere SS. Bonaventurae et Thomae placitis concinnata ; inter quos si aliquando videatur esse dissensio aut benigna explicatione componitur aut problematica disputatione ventilatur.* (Lyon, 1655).

step.[33] But throughout the greater part of the seventeenth century, though the downward tendency had begun to show itself, the doctrine and even the method of St. Bonaventura was nevertheless the basis of Capuchin theological training and it may be noted, the mark of all their best intellectual work.

(iii)

Writing about 1634, Marcantonio Galizio puts the question : " Since at all times there have been found in the little flock of Capuchins, men of subtle genius and tenacious memory, of acute reasoning power and of great learning, capable of writing all manner of books—why have so few been found to write them ?" He answers, quoting St. Thomas Aquinas, that though it is not at all unbecoming to expound the teaching of Christ by writing, the preaching of the Gospel is the nobler way. The Capuchins, therefore, have chosen to follow the nobler way. Why, then, he concludes, has he himself taken to writing instead of preaching, if preaching be the nobler way ? The reason, he confesses, is that he does not possess the divine art of preaching ; unhappily therefore, he is forced, though not without anguish of heart, to turn to writing.[34]

At the time Marcantonio penned that passage, France was being flooded with books written by Capuchins. Italy certainly could not complain of neglect, and elsewhere, as in Flanders and Germany, Capuchin writers were not unknown. Yet it remains true that the intellectual vigour of the Capuchins turned instinctively more towards preaching and the practical work of their apostolate than to leisurely literary work. Very few were set apart for the writing of books.

[33] cf. Prosper de Martigne : *La Scholastique et les Traditions Franciscains*, p. 36, *seq.* The more extreme " harmonisers " seem to have been the French scholastics. In Italy Bartolomeo Barberio made a gallant attempt to return to the purer tradition. His commentaries are of first rate importance to the student of St. Bonaventura. cf. *Biblioth. Script. Ord. Cap.*, p. 36 ; Prosper de Martigne, op. cit., p. 26.

As late as 1758 a *Decretum Generale*, confirmed by Benedict XIV, ordered the lectors of philosophy to return to the teaching of St. Bonaventura, or if because of the lack of books this were not possible, to expound the teaching of Scotus (*Bullar. Ord. Cap.*, VIII, p. 272).

[34] *Summa totius Dialecticae :* foreword *ad religiosum lectorum*. His reference to St. Thomas is to the *Summa*, part III, art. 4, quaest. 4, 2.

Their writers were with few exceptions at the same time active workers whose writing was subsidiary to the " nobler work " of preaching and the practical services of the Capuchin apostolate. Without question, the mere writer amongst the Capuchins held himself in low estimation as compared with the missionary preacher. Even Yves de Paris, the greatest literary genius of the Capuchins, as Valeriano Magno was their greatest philosopher, in his literary retreat thought wistfully of his brother preachers conducting their missions amongst the countryfolk of France :[35] an attitude of mind not unknown, I believe, in ancient Greece. Perhaps it was this persistent thirst to express themselves in active service which gave to their literary work its note of actuality ; what they wrote was an answer to some immediate need in the world around them ; and what is more, they wrote as men who understand the world they address. That note gives a certain distinction even to the large number of their minor writers : at least in these modest books you can learn something of the character of the world of their day ; from their greater writers you can learn much. The works of Yves de Paris and Zacharie de Lisieux, for instance, bring you into intimate acquaintance with the mind of seventeenth century France ; the sermons of Mattia da Salo palpitate with the religious idealism which renovated the spiritual life of Italy during the last half of the sixteenth century ; the eloquence of Girolamo da Narni is the eloquence of the orator of vision surveying the actual world around him. One realises that with these men—I am speaking of the Capuchin writers of the Counter-Reformation period—the world in which they lived was their book ; they were not mere students of the school nor thinkers wrapt up in their own individual emotions and experience. This, as one might expect, is more readily discerned in their apologetic writers and in their orators ; but it is also an underlying note of their greater mystical writers. Of that master-mystic, Benet Canfield—English by birth, French by adoption—his first biographer tells us that he was accustomed to contemplate the passion of Christ as taking place not on Calvary but in our very flesh and in the world about us. " Here in our humanity is the true cross on which Christ cries His ' sitio ' ; in the world

35 cf. *Les heureux succés*, edit. 1633, p. 655, *seq.*

of men Benet saw the passion being ever re-enacted ; the priest who celebrates for lucre is the apostle who sells his Lord ; when the Blessed Sacrament is received by obstinate sinners, Christ is delivered into the hands of His enemies ; He is mocked when men pray only with their lips ; those who oppress the poor, place the cross upon His shoulders ; those who sin grievously crucify Him in themselves.[36] With the Capuchin writers this cosmic view of life is ever in evidence. In the renunciation of self proper to their vocation they found the larger mystic self of Christian charity. We have seen it in the manifold service of their fellow-men which these Capuchins gave unflinchingly ; but it permeated all their mental outlook. It is the basis of that buoyant optimism which strikes one in their attitude towards human nature and the world generally ; a genuine Franciscan trait.

Take, for instance, the sermon by Girolamo da Narni which he preached at Perugia in 1601, from the text : " A certain man made a great supper and invited many."[37] As an example of pulpit oratory it has perhaps seldom been surpassed in its felicitous language, in impassioned but restrained emotion, and in the rhythm of its period ; and every word tells. But it is the sweep of the thought which arrests and compels attention. As Girolamo plays upon the text, the world as he sees it springs to life and reveals its God-given richness and beauty. He unfolds the drama of creation ; subtly and with a deft touch he makes you feel how good is this world which the Creator made in all its varied loveliness ; he makes you wonder at its richness. Then, whilst you are held in wonder, comes the refrain of the text. He passes by stages through the revelation of God's bounty in the history of men until he comes to the new revelation in the life of our Lord with its appeal of love and pity. He has run the gamut of life as it comes from the will of God ; each stage offers a new banquet to which many are invited until it comes to the banquet eternal " where star differs from star " and " there is no sameness." The conception of life as a banquet rich and lovely in its bounteous

[36] Jacques Brousse, op. cit., pp. 580-583. cf. *Rule of Perfection.*

[37] Luke XIV. The sermon entitled *De convivio supernae gloriae* and dedicated to Taddeo Perugino of the Order of Augustinian hermits, was published at Rome in 1602. *Vide* Appendix II.

variety, to which men are invited by the act of creation and again in the act of redemption, is surely the quintessence of the Franciscan gospel of joy. We have already referred to Marcantonio Galizio's *La Filomella* with its lyric note of song. In the sermons of Mattia da Salo *Delli Dolori di Gesù Cristo*,[38] the majesty of the sufferings of our Lord—and by consequence the nobility of Christlike suffering—is the dominant note. To Mattia da Salo the passion of our Lord is the revelation of the beauty that lies in suffering nobly borne : he has the tender worshipful vision which lends enchantment to the figure of the suffering Redeemer in the book of Isaias.

The same optimistic view of life is found in the master-writers of the congregation in France. In Italy it was as orators that the Capuchins reached their highest level in literature. I am unacquainted with the sermon-literature of the French Capuchins, but among them they counted apologetic writers of uncommon literary excellence and two at least who stand in the very forefront of the religious humanists of the period. In 1637 Zacharie de Lisieux published *La Philosophie Chrestienne*,[39] directed against the libertinism which rubbed shoulders with the new piety in the society of the time. In simple but vivacious language he exposes the arguments of the libertins, but the value of the book lies in his own argument that the true joy and nobility of human life is to be found only when the body is under the influence of a pure spirit. In the last chapter there are arresting passages in which he describes the spiritualising effect of a pure soul on the body, and how the body comes to share in the spirituality of the soul. It is the setting of a higher ideal of the pleasure of life as against the low ideal of the libertine. Human life, he says in effect, holds higher and more satisfying possibilities than the libertine has yet dreamt of. His later satires upon the religious foibles of French society and upon the Jansenists, deftly hit the religious busy bodies and self-conscious Puritans in their most vulnerable spot ; yet it is the healthy satire of a spirit in fundamental charity with

[38] cf. *supra*, p. 46.

[39] *La Philosophie Chrestienne ou Persuasions puissant au mespris de la vie :* par le P. Zacharie de Lysieux, *Predicateur Capucin* (Paris, 1637). The book is dedicated to Henrietta, consort of Charles I. Père Zacharie was for a time one of the Queen's chaplains.

all men, but hating self-complacency and morbidity.[40] Zacharie was a gentleman-at-arms before he entered the Capuchin Order in 1612. He knew his countrymen, both in their strength and weakness ; if in his satires he attacked the social evils to which the fashionable *dévots* blinded themselves and mercilessly unveiled the insincerities of the theological coteries, he appealed to the latent idealism of the French character in his *Philosophie Chrestienne* and again in *De la Monarchie du Verbe incarné* in which he set forth the ideal of a Christian state governed according to the law of the Gospel.[41] Zacharie de Lisieux is a healthy optimist : he loves his countrymen, and has a fundamental faith in them even when his satire bites into their foibles and lashes the oppressors of the poor.

We find the same spirit in the sunlit pages of a yet greater contemporary. Of Yves de Paris I hardly dare venture a judgment, for I have not yet lost the astonishment at his profundity of thought and sheer beauty of style, which held me the day I first opened a book of this almost forgotten writer. It was *La Théologie naturelle*. With a sense of rebellion I wondered how such a writer could have been allowed to pass into oblivion.[41a] My first feeling was that here was another John Henry Newman, born into the period when

[40] The satires were published under the assumed names of Pierre Firmian and the Sieur de Marcel ; the three satires under the name of Pierre Firmian are : *Saeculi Genius* (Paris, 1653), directed against the Jansenists and the feminine coteries where the discussion of theology was the fashion ; *Gyges Gallus* (Paris, 1658), in which by an ingenious allegory Firmian satirises the growing social abuses under the minority of Louis XIV ; *Somnia Sapientis* (Paris, 1658), an analysis of the French temperament. These three satires were written in Latin. A fourth satire written in French : *Relation du Pays de Jansenie . . . par Louis Fontaines Sieur de Saint Marcel* was published at Paris in 1660. It is a clever analysis of the physiognomy of the Jansenists of the time.

cf. *Bibliothèque Universelles des Romans*, 1779, décembre, p. 1, *seq.*

Abbé Ch. Guery : *Les œuvres satiriques du P. Zacharie de Lisieux* in *Etudes Franciscaines*, t. xxvii, p. 296, *seq.* cf. *Bibl. Script. Ord. Cap.*, p. 250.

[41] Two volumes of this work were published at Paris respectively in 1639 and 1649. The first volume was entitled : *De la monarchie du Verbe incarné ou del l'immense pouvoir du plus grand des rois, des hautes maximes politiques, et de marveilleux ordre qu'il observe dans le gouvernement de son estat ;* the second volume : *De la monarchie . . . ou il est traité de la bouté et de la justice du Prince.*

[41a] It was not until I had "discovered" Yves de Paris that I read H. Bremond's illuminating essays. I felt less ashamed of my own ignorance when I read the author's confession : "*Lorsque je commençais le présent travail et même, lorsque je pensais toucher au terme de mes recherches, j'ignorais encore tout d'Yves de Paris et jusqu'à son nom*" (I, p. 421). For a list of the works of Yves de Paris cf. *ibid.*, pp. 541-2. *Bibl. Script. Ord. Cap.*, p. 162.

libertinism and Jansenism together were threatening the purity of Catholic life in France ; there is the same combination of penetrating analysis with marvellous diction, the same broad human outlook with scholarly precision, the same magisterial marshalling of the facts that really matter ; the same anxiety to convince rather than to rebut ; the same ultimate appeal to the moral consciousness as the arbiter of reason.[42] To Yves de Paris the beauty of life is its ultimate vindication ; just as with Newman it was the vision beautiful towards which his mind ever tended.

La Théologie naturelle is directed at once against libertinism and Jansenism ; to Yves de Paris both systems stand condemned by Nature itself and by the divine law of which Nature is a revelation. But if libertinism is bad, Jansenism is worse, since its low estimate of human nature kills the hope without which no man can raise himself to higher things. If human nature were wholly bad what would there be but despair ? To recognise the true excellence of man's nature is with Yves de Paris the first condition of moral progress. " No man lifts himself up towards God unless he believes himself more powerful than all the world, stronger than the passions and the allurements of sensual pleasure and the depressions of sorrow ; if he does not rise above time and is not an eternity ; if he is not united to the First Cause by some sort of resemblance." "Let us away," he exclaims, " with these cowardly thoughts of the misery of man ; let us look to the excellences of his nature that we may show ourselves grateful to God, do justice to ourselves and not fall into despair of all virtue." And surely no man can read Yves de Paris and not be humbly thankful for that " mysterious alliance (of soul and body) which is our life " ; which witnesses to the inseparable union of the Divine Word with the Nature of His creation. To Yves de Paris Nature is a sacred thing ; nor will he tolerate without protest the blasphemy of those who see in human nature nothing but

[42]" 'Coeur, instinct, principes'; 'le cœur a ses raisons que le raison ne connait point' ; 'tu ne me chercherais pas, si tu ne me possédais' ; 'je dis que le coeur aime l'être universel naturellement' ; 'c'est le coeur qui sent Dieu et non la raison. Voilà ce que c'est que la foi Dieu sensible au coeur, non à la raison,' cette bien-heureuse doctrine, le P. Yves l'a soutenue, developpée, orchestrée magnifiquement."—H. Bremond, *Histoire Littéraire du Sentiment Religieux*, I, p. 487. See Appendix II.

inconstancy, infidelity and moral misery. Such blaspheming is not a confession of human misery, but a calumny against our excellence ; for man's miseries are his weaknesses, not his settled portion ; they are the eclipse of the sun, not the sun itself. Yves brings the blasphemy to book at the court of facts ; he searches the city and finds there more fidelity than infidelity, more virtue than vice. If human nature has strayed from the high estate in which it was formed by the Creator, its heart yet turns yearningly towards its rightful nobleness and finds happiness in the yearning hope. Such is the philosophy of Yves de Paris, developed with consummate conviction and a wealth of arresting thought in *La Théologie naturelle* and succeeding works. We may call it the philosophy of Christian Humanism ;[43] but it is surely the humanism of the saint of Assisi uttered in the clear trenchant language of this seventeenth-century scholar.

Thirty years before Yves de Paris burst into the intellectual life of France, another Capuchin, Laurent de Paris, had sung of the nobility of human nature in a litany of man " contemplated as honourable in his own nature " : man " in whom the divine intellect is allied with things terrestrial " ; who is " the assemblage of all perfections " ; " the perfection of the universe, of unplumbed capacity (abîme de capacité) in his intellect, his discernment and his will " ; " who can be no vile slave since God has chosen him to be the property of His Son (pour son *peculium*)."[44] To Laurent de Paris, human nature is the beloved of God, as to Girolamo da Narni, life is the rich and varied banquet to which man is the invited guest.

(iv)

It was all in keeping with this view of life that we find the Capuchin writers stressing the way of love as the most direct means to attain to the goal of life, and to the real knowledge of life. Not by the reasoning of the brain, but by the reasons known only to the heart, do we get any intimate knowledge

[43] " *La dernière génération de l'humanisme dévot . . . celle dont le P. Yves de Paris nous parait le representant le plus achevé.*"—H. Bremond, op. cit., I, p. 345.

[44] *Le Palais de l'amour divin entre Jésus.*

of God and the spiritual life, says Yves de Paris. "For love is unitive. An emotion of the heart weds the whole soul and with it all the world, to its First Cause."[45] But the knowledge gained in the schools he holds by comparison to be like the regions around the pole where the longest days leave the air charged with mists and the land is an eternal sterility[46]—and Yves de Paris had an unusually wide experience of the schools; nor indeed did he despise the knowledge thus gained (as is evident from his works) but only its pretension to dominate life. A simple lay-brother, he contends, who lives by the law of love, has a knowledge of the reality of life wanting to many a learned schoolman;[47] in which he echoes a well-known saying of St. Bonaventura.

This way of love is the burden of the ascetical and mystical writings which loom largely in the literary output of the Capuchins during the Counter-Reformation period. Their mystical writings exceeded their purely ascetical works. The mystical life and asceticism with them went hand in hand; the one was but a necessary preparation for the other. Not all were mystics in the more technical sense of the word; but broadly speaking it was the mystical way which the Capuchin followed, and his spiritual guides were masters in the mystical life. The mystical view of life permeates almost all their literature. It runs like a golden thread through the works of Yves de Paris; it was a source of power to their great preachers. At least, if by mysticism we mean the endeavour to come into touch with the underlying realities of life and with the substance of the faith we hold, then were these Capuchins of the race of mystics: that endeavour was the common note of their practical service and intellectual speculation; it was above all the object of their prayer. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that the exposition of the mystical life and treatises designed for guiding the novice in the way that leads to it, should fill a large place in the literature of the Capuchins. These latter treatises may perhaps be conveniently said to deal with the art of prayer, to distinguish them from the more intimate

[45] *La Théologie naturelle*, III, p. 134; "*Un élan du coeur rejoint toute l'âme et avec elle tout le monde à son principe.*"

[46] *ibid.*, p. 41.

[47] *Les heureux succes*, p. 174.

expositions of the mystical state itself. Such a treatise was that of Giovanni da Fano already referred to—the first of the known books written by a Capuchin. Another such, a masterpiece of its kind, was *Practica dell' orazione mentale, ovvero contemplativa*, by Mattia da Salo. In the opening chapter Mattia declares his purpose. Many books, he says, have been written on the utility and advantage of prayer, but mostly they lay down such general principles as to be of little use to the beginner. He therefore proposes to set forth a certain art or method of prayer by means of certain exercises. And first he devotes six chapters to an explanation of the Lord's Prayer ; for, he says, whoever rightly understands the Lord's Prayer knows all the reasons and motives of prayer. The Lord's Prayer in fact is the sum of all prayer. Having thus prepared the mind of the learner, he discusses the two sorts of prayer, vocal and mental ; and then proceeds to the rules and method by which the art of contemplation is acquired.

Mental prayer, he teaches, falls into three stages : preparation, meditation and action (i.e. acts of the will). Preparation is twofold : there is the general preparation, which consists in avoiding sin and cultivating the desire for prayer. Without this desire no one will readily come to prayer nor with the affection for it which renders it fruitful. And this desire for prayer is the best antidote to worldliness of mind and to the wasting of our time in useless occupations. Thus at the beginning love comes into play. Then there is the immediate or particular preparation which consists in the humility of heart which will dispose us to pray and keep our mind on prayer ; and in sorrow for our sins. No one, says Mattia da Salo, can rightly pray unless he comes to prayer thus prepared.

Next comes meditation—and for the beginner Mattia considers that this should take up the greater part of the exercise. The meditation should proceed from point to point so that the mind may " more easily digest " the matter meditated upon. Meditation, he says, teaches us to delight in God : it is the wood to enkindle the fire of desire and to inflame the affections. When the affections are thus moved, comes " action " ; for " affections ordinarily generate acts " ; and it is in acts of the will that the soul grasps God.

For beginners, acts of fear, of sorrow for sin and of the desire of amendment are the more appropriate. When they have made progress in prayer, they properly proceed to acts of hope and desire and of the purpose of doing good works, but the more perfect most usefully make acts of the love of God and of ardent desire of increasing in His love.

Finally he speaks of the operations which follow upon the acts of the will ; the purpose of amendment and of progressing in love ; of the giving of oneself to God ; of praise and thanksgiving and love. These operations within the soul begin during prayer ; outside of prayer they continue and give effect to prayer.

Such in brief outline is the method. Mattia then sets forth certain exercises for the learner in his various stages of progress but with the warning that these exercises are mere aids till the learner can fly with his own wings.

The general outline is, of course, common to many teachers in the art of prayer : what differentiates Mattia da Salò from not a few of these teachers is the simplicity with which he expounds his method, and his evident anxiety whilst giving direction not to impose a rigid regulation which might hamper liberty of spirit. He would train the novice to use his own wings. There is, too, a notable insistence that the object of meditation is to give fuel to the affections of the heart from which proceeds the " action " of the will and the subsequent operations of the soul. As prayer must begin in a preparation dictated by love, it must end in the operation of love. Mattia da Salò wrote many books, some of more insistent beauty of thought ; but none of more practical value to the religious soul than this " art of prayer."[48]

But it is with their mystical writers, properly so-called, that we enter into the inner chamber of the Capuchin soul.

Francesco da Jesi, the mentor of the congregation in the days of its first youth, defined the true poverty of the Francis-

[48] Similar works deserving attention are : *Introduction à la vie spirituelle par une facile méthode d'oraison* by Père Joseph du Tremblay (Paris, 1616) (on Père Joseph as a spiritual writer see H. Bremond, op. cit., II, chap. III, *La Tradizione Seraphique*, pp. 168-192) ; *L'Exercise méthodique de l'oraison mentale en faveur des âmes qui se retrouvent dans l'état de vie contemplative*, by Père Paul de Lagny (Paris, 1658) ; *Méthode Facile pour apprendre l'Oraison Mentale*, by P. Daniel d'Anvers (Lille, 1668).

can life as consisting in loving no earthly thing, but only the Divine Majesty and the perfect fulfilment of His will.[49] That is the basic principle of Capuchin mysticism ; the ultimate reality to which it tends. It was certainly in keeping with the bent of the Franciscan mind as revealed in St. Francis, and all pure Franciscan teaching, that Francesco da Jesi in his definition of poverty speaks of God as the Divine Majesty. In St. Francis' " Praises of Creatures," commonly known as " The Canticle of the Sun," the burden of the song is the majesty of the Creator as revealed in the visible creation ; conversely, worshipful wonder at the divine perfection revealed to us is the formative habit of the Franciscan mind. It accounts for the almost childlike spontaneous emotion and the trust in the spontaneous affections aroused in the contemplation of the spiritual world which has been noted as a mark of Franciscan spirituality.[50] The purpose of the mystical writers to whose works we now refer was to teach the way by which a man may come to realise in himself in a more perfect fashion this worshipful reverence, and through it come to a more intimate experience of the divine life revealed to us. The path they set forth was the way of the will purified and elevated by divine love ; or in other words a union of the human will, effected by love, with the Divine will. For the effecting of this union, the Capuchin mystics, continuing the Franciscan tradition, relied more on the instructive " reasoning of the heart," quickened by the action of divine grace, than on the action of the reasoning mind. " The heart has its own reasons which reason cannot comprehend " might be written over all their speculation.

Upon this principle Constantine de Barbaçon, a friar of Flanders and later of Cologne, based his exposition of the

[49] " *Diceva il venerabile Fra Francesco da Jesi : La vera povertà consiste in non amare cosa nissuna terrena ma solo la Divina Maestà et di fare perfettamente la voluntà Sua.*" Bernardino da Colpetrazzo : *Della sancta Poverta*, MS., cit., p. 1233.

[50] e.g. Henri Bremond thus contrasts Franciscan spirituality with that of the Jesuits : " *La spiritualité Franciscaine parait plus affective, celle des jésuites plus volontaire et spéculative ; la première est peut-être plus libre, plus épanoissante, la seconde plus rigide, entourée de plus de contraintes : l'une enfin s'ouvre plus naïvement au don mystique, l'autre, plus timide, plus en garde contre illusion, plus résignée au silence de Dieu, vise moins aux douceurs de la contemplation qu'au dépouillement du vieil homme* " (op. cit., II, p. 137-138).

mystical life.[51] "Do not be anxious for many rules," he says, "provided thou canst love much." "Where the heart is, there at once are all the other powers; and if the heart be not set aright, well may we break our heads but all to no purpose." Constantine de Barbançon recognises that this direct way of love is not best suited for all men. Different men, he urges, are made in different moulds, and not all can profitably follow the same road. With a perfect sanity it refuses to decry the method of those who teach that rational understanding must precede the activity of love; the method these set forth is suitable for some. On the other hand he claims that this is not the only method or way; that the activity of love can and does precede a rational understanding; and that for some this is the better way. He will not be drawn into scholastic controversy; he rests his argument upon experience. But he gives this warning: "Note this well, that I do not speak of any childish love full of sweetness, but of a generous and strong love which leads a soul to despise all earthly things and itself also and unites it to God with a resolute fidelity and sincere affection." The whole method resolves itself into a purification of the will by love, to the end that the human will become perfectly united with and responsive to the Divine will operating within the human soul; so that eventually the Divine and human wills act together as one in a perfect mutual love. But the distinctive feature of *The Secret Paths* as of all Capuchin mysticism, and of the Bonaventuran tradition itself, is the insistence on the direct operation of love itself as the means to this mystic union.

More subtly and as moving in a rarer atmosphere, does Benet Canfield expound the same doctrine in *The Rule of Perfection*[52] where he sums up the whole of Christian perfec-

[51] *Amoris Divini Occultae Semitae in quibus vera calistis sapientia et Regnum Dei quod intra nos est, absconditum latet Auctore R. P. F. Constantine de Brabanson, Predicatore Capucino et conventus coloniensis guardiano.* (Cologne, 1626.)

It appears from the imperial licence to print the work in Latin and German that it was first published in French. An English version by Dom Anselm Touchet, O.S.B., made before 1657 has recently been re-edited with some abridgment by Dom Justin McCamm, O.S.B., under the title: *The Secret Paths of Divine Love* in the *Orchard Books* series (London, 1928).

[52] The *Rule of Perfection* was published by the author in Latin, French and English. Its Latin title is: *Regula Perfectionis: seu breve totius vitae spiritualis compendium* (Cologne, 1610).

The English title is: *The Rule of Perfection contayning a brief and perspicuous*

tion as consisting in a conformity of the will of man with the will of God. But the word conformity, as commonly understood, hardly expresses his doctrine ; neither does he speak of a moral union between the two wills, Divine and human, effected by love. But the will of God with which the human will thus become morally united, is the will of God, not in its incomprehensible infinitude but as the Divine will is made known to man either as an external law by way of reason and the Divine commandments or as it indwells by Divine grace in man himself.[53] As it is revealed in external law Benet Canfield designates it the exterior will of God ; as it indwells in man, he terms it the interior will of God.[54] There is yet a third manner in which the Divine will is

abridgment of all the wholle spirituall life reduced to this only point of the will of GOD ; divided into three Partes : the first treating of the exterior will of GOD contayning the active life ; the second, the interior essentiall will concerning the life super eminent : composed by the R. F. Benet, Capucin . . . heretofore called W. Fitch of Canfield in Essex, Roan (Rouen), 1609. As a matter of fact, the English version omits the third part as being too difficult, the author says, to be understood except by those who have experienced this highest state.

The work was translated into Italian. The Italian translator seems to have taken liberties with the text, and this led to the *Rule of Perfection* being placed upon the Index in 1689, during the Quietist scare (cf. *Anal. Ord. Cap.*, vol. xlii, p. 28), just as the work of Père Surin, S.J., was placed on the Index in the same circumstances. In consequence some modern writers have placed Benet Canfield amongst " Quietist authors," probably without taking the trouble to read his work—a not uncommon habit. Neither Père Surin nor Benet Canfield was a Quietist. The very essence of Benet Canfield's teaching is the active co-operation of the human will with the Divine. True, in the perfect stage of the union the human will has become so intimately at one with the Divine will, so entirely conformed, that it has no will of its own other than the Divine will, yet even so it is not purely passive but eminently active in its pure expression of the will of God ; the union, in fact, is maintained in the free activity of the will of God in the human soul on the one hand, and the free activity of the human will, which in its perfect abandonment of itself to the Divine will acquires a new life—the life supereminent, in which the two wills become one without loss of separate identity, by the act of perfect love. In attempting to explain the process of this supreme union of love, Benet Canfield, in the third part of his treatise, is not free from obscurity—as one who would not be even in attempting to explain the intimate action of the life of purely human love. " *Nec lingua valet dicere nec littera exprimere, expertus potest credere.*" Hence, in his Latin version, Canfield warned the reader not to embark on the third part of his treatise without expert guidance ; and in his English version omitted the third part altogether.

It may be well to warn the reader that a work purporting to be the *Rule of Perfection* by Benet Canfield entitled : *The Holy Will of God : a short Rule of Perfection by Father Benedict Canfield . . . translated by Henry Collins* (London, Art and Book Company—without date) is not Benet's *Rule of Perfection*, but only an adaptation from it.

[53] cf. *Rule of Perfection*, I, Chapter v, and II, Chapter i.

[54] These are the English terms he uses in his own translation.

revealed to us, and that he terms the essential will of which man has an experimental knowledge only in the highest degree of mystical union. The exterior will of God is realised by man in his active life of service; the interior in the life of contemplation: in the highest "supereminent" life of mystical union the active and the contemplative states become subtly intermingled: the active becomes contemplative, the contemplative active. In this union of wills man attains to the most intimate possible union with God, short of the hypostatic union. Let us hear Benet himself: "Although the will of God be incomprehensible in itself yet being in our soule it is made comprehensible; and though in itself it be hidden, yet being joined to ours it is made knowne: for as God which was incomprehensible being in our fleash was made comprehensible, and which was invisible by joyning himself with our humanitie was made visible: so it is of his will which is his spirit and himselfe; for before it be in our will it is hidden and unknown, but being joined therewith it is seene and manifestly known to the soule; and as before the Incarnation hee was only God but after the union with our humanitie was God and man, so the will of God which was only Divine, after the union with ours is divine and humaine: and as that man by that union might say, I am God, so the will of man by such an union may say, I ame the will of God, according to the saying of Saint Gregory Nazian, saying, *Deus humanatus est, homo autem Deificatus*, God is made humaine and man is made divine: and Saint Augustine saying; *Talis erat illa susceptio quae Deum hominem faceret et hominum Deum*. . . Yet not that this union of wills is hypostaticall as was that of the two natures, but is made by a linke of love and light of grace."[55] In his own time Benet Canfield was regarded by such acknowledged masters of the science of the mystical life as the Carthusian, Dom Beaucousin and Madame Acarie's director, André Duval, as an outstanding authority. Père Joseph du Tremblay, that lynx-eyed enemy of the Quietists, confessed himself a disciple of Benet Canfield, though he thought him not sufficiently "practical" for the ordinary run of men. St. Francis de Sales acknowledged his authority, though like Benet Canfield himself he considered that the third part

55 *The Rule of Perfection*, I, chap. ii, pp. 18-19.

of the treatise was liable to be misunderstood by those inexpert in the higher stages of the mystical life.[56] "*The Rule of Perfection*" is not easy reading; hardly a book for the novice in the spiritual life. Nor I think can it be thoroughly appreciated at its real value without some knowledge of the writer. Few perhaps knowing Benet Canfield only by his master work would be aware that he was sensitive to the beauty of things; one who could be ravished out of himself by the symbolism of the liturgy and by "the sweet melody, the incomparable divine harmony of the organ and the blending of the sweetest voices chanting in the church."[57] To know the man helps us to understand his ravishment when he contemplates the beauty of the life in God.

Of an easier style and finer literary quality is the work of Joannes Evangelista van Hertogenbosch, the Flemish mystic, *Het Rijk Gods in U*;[58] of which an English translation was published in 1657 by the Benedictine, Dom Peter Salvin, under the title, *The Kingdome of God in the Soule*. The argument is the same as that of Benet Canfield, and the author manifestly writes with the knowledge of personal experience; but there is a certain breeziness of style as of the open sea which Johannes Evangelista evidently loved, and of which he shows a seaman's knowledge. There is in him a vast simplicity of mind which enables him to speak of the deepest mysteries of the mystical life in homely fashion such as one seldom finds in the mystical works of the period. He had evidently been a keen observer of nature before he began to peer into the mysteries of the human soul. Listen to the opening chapter of his book in Dom Salvin's English:

[56] cf. the preface to his English version.

[57] Brousse, op. cit., p, 517, *seq.*; cf. Henri Bremond's appreciation of Benet Canfield, op. cit., II, chap. III: *La Tradition Séraphique*, pp. 152-168 *et passim*.

[58] The author is described as Father John Evangelist of Balduke (Bois-le-Duc). A rare copy of this translation is kept at the Benedictine Abbey of Stanbrook, and I have to thank the Lady Abbess for so courteously lending it to me. The work, *Het Rijk Gods in U*, was published at Antwerp in 1639. It has recently been re-edited by P. Paschasius van Meerveldhoven (Bruges, 1921).

Concerning John Evangelist, cf. P. Frédégand d'Anvers: *Etudes sur le Père Charles d'Aremberg*, op. cit., p. 161. It may be noted here that the three mystical writers already referred to in the text were favourite authors with the English Benedictines. We have elsewhere seen the intimate relations between the Capuchins and the reformed Benedictines in France.

"There is noe Ignorance soe unbeseeming or hurtfull, as for a Man to doe a Thing, and not to know the end for which Hee doth itt. For it is the first Thing he ought to know, and for want thereof Hee can do nothing that is fitting, or profitable but by chance. Therefore, if any undertake a Trade or Office, Hee first of all endeavours to learne what is required to the due performance of the same. And it is yet much more unbeseeming not to know the end for which Hee is and for what Hee is Created and lives. For thither ought to be directed the workes and endeavours of all Men: like as the arrow of the Archer to the white, or Marke . . . All creatures from the least to the greatest as well, reasonable as unreasonable, know the end of their living and being, their proper place to which they belong and thither do they always tend, and incline themselves to that quarter of the world soever they be, exactly performing that for which nature ordained them. . . And it is soe firmly imprinted into each one by Nature that they never fayle to fulfill that for which they are created. Man only is ignorant of the end for which Hee is and why Hee hath received this present life and is placed in this world. . . By reason of this Ignorance the world is still full of Errors and Disorders. If wee could from some High Towre behold the occupation of most Men in the world and had likewise before our eyes the end for which one and altogether were created: we should not be able sufficiently to wonder at the Blyndnesse of the children of Adam, as though we should see the Fishes leape out of the water to flye in the Ayre as the Byrds; and on the contrary, Byrds cast themselves into the water to swimme and live there as Fishes; it would not seeme more strange and wonderfull to us than to behold men to work so contrary to the end for which they were created by God."

One of the causes of this ignorance of God, he points out, is that men do not seek Him with the same carefulness of observation as to the right means as they use when seeking any other thing they would gladly obtain. They are frequently like to those "who look for herons in the midst of the cornfield in the heat of summer, and hunt for with dogs as they do the hare." Others rely too much on their own powers, not committing themselves sufficiently to God: but "our own powers like dogs run along the ground apprehending, tasting and feeling inferior and created things; they are no more fitted to apprehend, taste and enjoy God than the dogs to catch the heron." And describing the

various ways in which men fail to attain unto a true union with God he says :

" others being free from all Externall things and from themselves also, think this is sufficient and therefore do no more ; believing that they so remaining shall more and more be united unto God. But these are like unto Him that being now in the sea and from all Lands, thinks Hee is to do no more, and neither puts up mast or hoysts up sayl ; deeming that the fludd of the sea will carry Him into the Haven ; and in the meantime lyeth floating upon the water driven now hyther, now thyther without profiting. Lo, thus many are deemed of this last sort of Men that seeke God, who may well be very neere the right way to find God but yet really are not in itt. . . They remayn as straying ships in the midst of the Ocean which know not the right way to the Haven ; and sometimes runn on a shelfe or driven through tempests into some strange Country ; yea it happens sometimes to be splitt and be cast away."

Johannes Evangelista is no less profound than Benet Canfield, but his breezy homeliness helps one over many a steep stile.

Benet Canfield was the first of a long line of exponents of the mystical life amongst the French Capuchins. Honoré de Champigny, Martial d'Etampes, Sebastien de Senlis,[60] were amongst the earlier exponents ; Joseph de Dreux,[61] Paul de Lagny,[62] Alexandrin de la Ciotat,[63] were amongst those who continued the tradition. Speculative mysticism seems to have found a larger body of disciples amongst the Capuchins in France than elsewhere. In other provinces and even in France, the mysticism of the Capuchins must also be studied, as in its fruits, in the "books of devotion," and the ascetical works which emanated from their pen. But a point to be noted before we leave these expositors of the mystical life is this—they all hold that the highest spirituality lies in

[60] *Philosophie des contemplatifs contenant toutes les leçons fondamentales de la vie active, contemplative et suréminente* (Paris, 1621).

[61] cf. Ubald d'Alençon : *La Spiritualité Franciscaine*, in *Etudes in Franciscaes*, Tome XXXIX, pp. 464-465.

[62] *Le chemin abrégé de la perfectien chrétienne dans l'Exercice de la volonté de Dieu* (P., 1673).

[63] *Le parfait Dénuement de l'âme contemplative* (Paris, 1680). cf. P. Ubald d'Alençon : *La Spiritualité Franciscaine*, loc. cit. p. 466, *seq.*

the union of the contemplative with the active life ; some of them stress the duty of the contemplative to abandon the consolations of " the hidden life with God " when duty calls him to the external services of charity towards God and his neighbours. Only they give the warning that the true spiritual man even in his active life of service will carry with him the contemplative habit and find his most intimate union with God even in the service of his neighbour and the duties common to all. Thus for instance Sébastien de Senlis declares : " If the duty of charity or of obedience calls us to any external activity at a time when ecstasy would lift us up into the third heaven, we must leave all and quickly descend. If the moon were always in conjunction with the sun there would be here below nothing but confusion and disorder. . . So too, if the soul would be always abstracted in the contemplation of the things above and refuse to fall in with the common duties of human life, there is nothing more sure than that she would let everything perish and be lost, yea and be lost herself."[64] The same principle had been laid down by the first Capuchin writer, Giovanni da Fano. Always must the service one owes to God and to one's neighbour come before any mere personal gain or pleasure, however holy in itself : never would they allow that the highest spirituality is antisocial. Such was the lesson they learned from the life of the Divine Redeemer.

As we have suggested it is not easy always to segregate their ascetical works from the mystical, since usually the asceticism taught by the writers is an introduction to the mystical life. Such, for instance, is the character of the works of Jean-François de Reims,[65] of Alessio de Salo[66] and of many other writers whose asceticism is illumined with the mystical glow. A review of Capuchin literature of the Counter-Reformation period leads persistently to the conclusion that the temperament of the Capuchin was the mystical temperament. All his best work was done under its

[64] *Philosophie des contemplatifs*, quoted by Ubald d'Alençon, loc. cit., p. 460.

[65] See *supra*. *La vraye perfection de cette vie dans l'exercice de la presence de Dieu* (Paris, 1635) ; *Le Directeur Pacifique* (Paris, 1632).

[66] *Via sicura del Paradiso in segnatici da Gesu Cristo* (Brescia, 1622). A French translation was published at Lyon in the same year : *Le Chemin asseuré de Paradis*. Nor may one omit mention of *Practique Intérieure des principaux exercices de la vie chrestienne* by Joseph du Tremblay.

impulse. And that is true not only of Capuchin literature but of all Capuchin activities. In the pulpit, the mission-field and the plague-ridden city, it was the mystic quest which drew him forth and inspired his service. In the temporal they touched the eternal.

EPILOGUE

The middle of the seventeenth century saw the Capuchins at the height of their influence in the religious life of the Catholic Church. True, the congregation continued to increase in numbers and to extend its missionary activities until the political upheavals towards the close of the eighteenth century brought about the destruction of its fairest provinces. But it was in the spiritually re-creative atmosphere of the Catholic Reformation that their idealism had full play and their distinctive purpose was unfolded with amazing vigour. During that period their activity and influence is comparable only with that of the Jesuits. Both bodies were singularly representative of the new age, spiritually and mentally ; and in that in large measure lay the secret of their success. With the Jesuits this is not astonishing; they were an entirely new institution. But the Capuchins are a rare instance of an old institution reborn into a new time, and becoming one spiritually and mentally with the time.

In the course of our review of their history during the long struggle of the Catholic Reformation, we have seen them issue from their primitive hermitages and cover Europe and far outlying lands with their multifarious activities. But the seed of their wide-spreading activities was already sown in their first hermitages. Little as they knew it, those first Capuchins who assembled in Chapter in the mountainous retreat of Albacinia were an embodiment of the spirit which was to revivify the Catholic people and recover for the Catholic Church its spiritual dominion over at least its professed subjects. Not without reason were the most convinced friends and upholders of the nascent Reform found amongst the devout humanists of the time. It was in fact the imperious religious instinct of the Catholic humanist movement which

moulded and gave character to the Capuchin Reform from the days of Vittoria Colonna till the time of Yves de Paris. That is the outstanding feature in their history ; and for that the history of the Capuchins deserves more attention than has hitherto been given it in the study of the Catholic Reformation.

APPENDIX I

OF THE SOURCES OF EARLY CAPUCHIN HISTORY

1°.—The Official Annalists.

It has been unfortunate for the early history of the Capuchins that later historians have relied almost exclusively upon the *Annales* of Boverius[1] when relating the origin and early progress of the Capuchin Reform. Fra Zaccaria Boverio da Saluzzo seems to have been a delightfully vivacious person, loyal to his friends and of a fundamental good will towards all men. He was, too, an optimist of roseate visions. Did he not believe that Charles I of England (with whom he had many conversations on religion when that prince was visiting the Spanish Court) needed only to be taught the true faith to become reconciled to the Catholic Church, and did he not write a really learned work especially to effect his conversion?[2] He worked, also, as a zealous missionary amongst the Waldenses in the Sub-Alpine valleys; but his great desire was to be allowed to undertake missionary work in England; for the English somehow appealed to him. But as a historian he was hopeless. He could tell a good story; he had the dramatic instinct; he was an untiring worker. Had he possessed a critical judgment, his "Annals of the Capuchins" might have been a work beyond the average, combining authentic history with literary skill; and moreover he might have written a convincing "Apologia pro vita sua" on behalf of the Capuchins. He undoubtedly had skill as an apologist. It was his critical judgment which was at fault; and his too

[1] *Annalium seu Sacrarum Historiarum Ordinis Minorum S. Francisci qui Capucini nuncupantur, Tomus primus* (Lugduni, 1632), *Tomus Secundus* (Lugduni, 1639).

[2] *Orthodoxa Consultatio de Ratione verae fidei agnoscendae et amplectendae . . . auctore R. P. Zacharia Boverio Salutiensi, Ord. Min. S. Francisci qui Capucini nuncupantur* (Romae, 1635). In the introduction Boverius says he began to write the book ten years previously for the instruction of Charles I of England, at that time Prince of Wales.

great readiness to put faith in the reports that told in favour of his thesis. The result has been succinctly put by the cautious scholarly Père Edouard d'Alençon in his prologue to *De Primordiis Ordinis FF. Min. Cappuccinorum.* Referring to the *Annales*, he writes : "*Ponderoso de hoc opere judicium ferre non intendo ; absque illius ope hanc historiam describere conatus sum : raro illum confutare curabo, nec ejus testimonium requiram, nisi quando omni alio me destitutum inveniam.*" (p.6). In other words, it is unsafe to use the *Annales* unless you have independent confirmatory evidence to support the annalist. Still, Boverius is not altogether to be neglected; at least not by the patient student. Amid the medley of truth and fiction which too often disfigures his pages, one may come upon clues not easily found elsewhere.

One result of the publication of the first two volumes of the *Annales* was to revive the ancient controversy between the Observants and the Capuchins and to import into it an unreasoning bitterness which redounded neither to the good sense of the protagonists on either side nor to the edification of the world at large ; a result which was deplored by the saner minds on both sides. The early Capuchin chronicler, Bernardino da Colpetrazzo, would undoubtedly have denounced it as "una scandalosa disputatione." But it must be remembered that the seventeenth century was not remarkable for a pacific temper nor for impartial criticism. The Irish annalist of the Franciscan Order, Luke Wadding, was one of the few exceptions to the general rule amongst historical writers of the century.

Boverius carried the *Annales* to the year 1611 ; a third volume by Marcellin de Pise was published at Lyon in 1676. An Appendix to the Third Volume by Silvestro da Milano appeared at Milan in 1737 ; which brought the *Annales* down to the year 1639.

Both these writers were free from the polemical spirit of Boverius ; but from the point of view of modern scholarship they both leave much to be desired.

No further attempt to continue the *Annales* was made until the latter part of the last century when the *Annali dell' Ordine dei Frati Minori Cappuccini* by P. Pellegrino da Forlì was published at Milan, the first volume in 1882 and the three succeeding volumes in 1883, 1884 and 1885. Pele-

grino da Forli's *Annali* make edifying reading. The work, drawn from manuscripts supplied to the author by the various provinces of the Order, is without critical apparatus or documentation.

Attention must, however, be called to the Italian translation of the two volumes by Boverius, published at Turin in 1641 by Benedetto Sanbenedetti da Milano. The translator made additions from independent sources.

2°.—The Early Chronicles.

The first chronicler of the Reform was Fra *MARIO DA MERCATO-SARACENO*, who left three separate accounts of the origin and first developments of the congregation. Fra Mario became a Capuchin in 1536. In his boyhood he knew Matteo da Bascio who was frequently entertained by Mario's father. Later, in 1543, Matteo was a guest of the Capuchins in their friary at Camerino where Mario was guardian and on that occasion Matteo related to Mario a detailed account of the origin of the Reform. Giuseppe da Colleamato, one of the first band of Capuchins, and Frae Eusebio d'Ancona who joined the Reform in 1534, were also among Mario's informants (see *Descrizione* ut infra, ed. Giuseppe da Fermo, p. 4 ; *Narratione* ut infra, MS. cart. 56). Mario was therefore well equipped to write his accounts of the origin of the Reform.

His first account took the form of a letter addressed in 1569 to Honorio da Montegranaro, Vicar Provincial of Tuscany, and was written at the request of Cosmo di Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany. It was published by P. Edouard d'Alençon in *Analecta. Ord. Cap.* vol. xxiii, p. 273, *seq.* In the MS. it is entitled : *Breve dichiaratione dell'origine della nostra congregatione.* His second account was written in 1575 at the request of Cardinal Sanseverina : it is entitled *Descrizione nella quale fedelmente si ragiona et narra, come, quando et dove cominciò la reforma de Frati Capuccini di S. Francesco.* It has recently been edited from a manuscript in the Capuchin friary at Cingoli by P. Giuseppe da Fermo and published at Ancona in 1927. The third and by far the fullest account was written about 1580, and is entitled *Narratione dell'origine della congregatione de Frati Capuccini cioe come, quando, dove e da ché ella hebbe il suo principio.* Three codices of this work

are known to exist: one in the provincial archives of the Capuchins at Venice; another in the Bibliotheca Nazionale at Naples and a third in the municipal library of Lyon. A transcript of the Venice codex is in the General Archives of the Capuchins in Rome. It is to this transcription that I refer in the text. The Venetian codex is dated 1582. The *Narratione* relates the history of the congregation down to and including the generalate of Eusebio d'Ancona (A.D. 1555) Mario da Mercato-Saraceno died in 1581 leaving his manuscript unrevised. The task of revising the *Narratione* was committed to Bernardino da Colpetrazzo, who in 1575 had been commissioned by the Vicar General, Girolamo da Montefiore, to write the lives of some of the ancient brethren of the congregation, noted for their sanctity. Bernardino, moreover, in 1580, had been requested to write his memoirs of the first days of the Reform with special reference to the lives of the holier brethren. Thus it was that he came to write his valuable chronicle.

Of the *CHRONICLE OF BERNARDINO DA COLPETRAZZO* three codices exist, one in the provincial archives of the Capuchins at Assisi; another in the Bibliotheca Casanatense in Rome; a third (together with a transcript recently made) in the General Archives of the Capuchins in Rome. It is to this third codex that we refer in the text. The foreword to this codex is dated: *nel* 1585 *a di* 15 *Fbre nel luogo nostro di Spoleti*; but this work was not completed until 1592: "*nel luogo nostro sto Pietro d'Acquasparte il di* 2 *di Settembre nel* 1592."

Bernardino passed to the Capuchins from the Observants in 1536. He tells us that he knew Matteo da Bascio, and Lodovico da Fossombrone; and that Bernardino d'Asti, Francisco da Jesi and Bernardino da Monte del'Olmo were his "ministers." He was moreover, secretary to Bernardino d'Asti and Francesco da Jesi when these were Vicars-General. Consequently he had special facilities for gaining knowledge of the developments of the Reform. Writing in his old age he is not always correct as to dates; but he retained a vivid memory of the events he relates and of the personalities of the men he writes about.

His chronicle and that of Mario da Mercato-Saraceno are in the main the most reliable sources of our knowledge of the

origin and early growth of the Capuchin Reform. In the relation of the early struggles of the Reform one notes the difference of tone in regard to the Observants, between Boverius on the one hand, and Bernardino da Colpetrazzo and Mario da Mercato-Saraceno on the other hand. There is in these earlier chronicles none of the impassioned controversial spirit which mars the *Annales* of Boverius. To them the Observants are brethren of the same Order though of a separate congregation and the spirit of fraternity is never wanting.

It soon became evident to the General Superiors of the Reform that Bernardino da Colpetrazzo was too old to carry on the historical work begun by Mario da Mercato-Saracino, however admirable he might be as a writer of memoirs: so about 1587, the exact date is unknown, Mattia da Salò was commissioned to write afresh the "history" of the Reform. The choice was unfortunate from the point of view of pure history. Mattia da Salò was a brilliant writer and a deep thinker of an original cast of mind. What he really wrote was an "Apologia pro vita sua" on behalf of the Capuchins: an admirable piece of work of its own kind though weakened by "théorie tendancieuse"; at least as regards the earlier portion of his work. The title of *THE CHRONICLE OF MATTIA DA SALO* fitly describes the purpose he had in view: *Historia Capuccina che tratta dell'ultima e perfetta riforma della Religione de So. Francesco di frati minori osservanti detti Cappuccini.* It is written in two books or volumes; and the first book is divided into two treatises. The first of these treatises deals with the origin of the Reform; the second with the reform movements in the Franciscan Order from its beginning until the Capuchin Reform. The second book begins with the election of Bernardino d'Asti as Vicar-General; but it is a curious medley of biographies of saintly persons, some not connected with the Reform, and of events in the history of the Reform. It is not unlikely that the second volume was written in collaboration with his "socius" and fellow townsman, Giacomo da Salò. It is to be noted that Boverius frequently refers to the *Historia Capuccina* and accepted its authority as against the two earlier and reliable chroniclers. The "théorie tendancieuse" of Mattia da Salò was that the capuchin reforms the final and ultimate

reform long desired by the more zealous friars since the day of John of Parma. It is the same theory as was held by Francesco da Jesi and many if not all of the early Capuchins; but Mattia da Salò works out the long contest between the "frati buoni" and the "frati cattivi" systematically and in great detail, tracing the history of Franciscan reforms and emphasising the progressive character of the Reform movement towards the final realisation of its desire in the Capuchins. The intention of the argument is not without merit, but as a piece of historical writing it is spoiled by the special pleader's handling of the subject. It is not without extravagance; and Père Frédégand Callaey rightly attributes to the *Historia Capuccina* the later development of the partisan temper which marred the work of Boverius.[3] But with Mattia da Salò the partisan temper is unconscious. For the Observants he has no personal ill-will. He reminds the Capuchins that though the Conventuals were the nurse of the Reform in its infancy, the Observants were the mother of the Reform (Lib. I, pp. 331-332); and with Mattia as with the earlier chroniclers there is a strong sense and clear recognition of the fraternal bond that properly unites all the congregations or families or the Franciscan Order.

Two codices of the *Historia Capuccina* exist: one in the General Archives of the Capuchins in Rome, to which we refer in the text, and another—an earlier version—in the Vatican Archives. A copy of a French translation made at the beginning of the seventeenth century by Philippe de Cambrai is in the municipal library at Douai (MS. no. 872, fol. 202 *seq*).

Mattia da Salò died in 1611, leaving his chronicle unfinished and unrevised; and the writing of the definitive history of the Reform was again begun at the command of the General Superiors, by Paolo da Foligno, assisted by Giacomo da Salò.

The *CHRONICLE OF PAOLO DA FOLIGNO*, written in Italian, of which the original manuscript is kept in the Capuchin General Archives in Rome, treats of the events in the history of the Reform down to the middle of the sixteenth century and adds some notices of the lives of saintly

[3] *L'infiltration des idées franciscaines spirituelles* op. cit. (infra, Appendix II), pp. 402-403.

brethren after that period. Paolo did not live to complete his work. It is divided into two volumes. The first volume consists of five treatises or books : the first tells the story of Matteo da Bascio until his death ; the second tells of Ludovico da Fossombrone and the progress of the Reform under his government ; the third of the history of the Reform under Bernardino d'Asti ; the fourth relates the story of Ochino ; and the fifth, the story of the Capuchins in Calabria. The second volume deals with the lives of notable brethren. Paolo da Foligno relates several incidents not found in the earlier chronicles and gives the primitive Constitutions of Albacina (I, fol. 38-46). Boverius frequently quotes this chronicle under the caption : *Salodiensis*. Giacomo da Salo certainly annotated the manuscript and may have been part-composer.[4]

It was after the death of Paolo da Foligno that the writing of the *Annales* was committed to Boverius.

Mention must be made of the *CHRONICA FR. JOANNIS ROMAEI DE TERRANOVA*. Giovannello da Terranuova was one of the Calabrian Recollets who joined the Capuchins in 1532. No copy of his original chronicle is known to exist ; but what purports to be an account of the origin of the Capuchins taken from his chronicle appeared in a book published at Messina in 1613 by Silvestro Maruli or Maurolico and entitled : *Historia Sagra intitolato Mare Oceano de tutte le Religioni del Mondo*. The extract translated from the original Italian into Latin was published in *Acta Sanctorum* (Mensis Maii, Tom. IV, pp. 281-289). The Italian and Latin versions were republished with critical notes by P. Edouard d'Alençon in 1907 in *Analecta Ord. Cap.*, Vol. xxiii, p. 9, *seq*. The chronicle mainly concerns the history of the first Capuchins in Calabria. The question is : Does the extract faithfully represent Giovannello's text ? Paolo Gualteri da Terranova in his *Legendario di SS. Martiri di Calabria* (Napoli, 1630) quotes Fra Girolamo da Dinami as asserting that Giovannello's chronicle had been twice adulterated (pp. 322, 349). Girolamo da Dinami's chronicle from which Gualtieri quotes is now lost. It was written about the middle of the sixteenth century and related the story of the Capuchins in Calabria.[5]

4 cf. P. Edouard d'Alençon : *De Primordiis*, p. 5.
5 cf. *Bibl. Script. Ord. Cap*, op. cit. p. 118.

Of *MINOR CHRONICLES* attention should be called to an account of the origin of the Capuchin Reform and its development in the province of Brescia published at Brescia in 1622 : *Breve Ragguaglio del Tempo in cui vennero a Bergamo i Cappuccini . . . raccolta per F. Celestino Sacerd. Capuccino.* Celestino Colleoni da Bergamo wrote a long history of Bergamo, *Storia Quadripartita de Bergamo* : of which his account of the coming of the Capuchins to Bergamo originally formed part. The *Breve Ragguaglio* is a delightful chronicle worthy almost to stand beside the *Fioretti di San Francesco ;* at least so far as it relates to the Bergamaschi Capuchins. A long defence of the Capuchin habit is less interesting.

Then there is the chronicle recently edited by P. Sisto da Pisa in *L'Italia Francescana* (Roma, 1926, p. 31, *seq.*)under the title : *I Frati Minori Cappuccini nel primo seculo dell'origine* and ascribed to Fra Ruffino da Siena.[6] This chronicle should rather be styled a compilation drawn from the chronicles of Mario da Mercato-Saraceno and Bernardino da Colpetrazzo. It was composed about the end of the sixteenth century. In style it is limpid and of a distinct literary quality. Of all the Capuchin chronicles it is the one that would best lend itself to popularisation. It is referred to by Boverius.

The compilation, *Vite di alcuni Cappuccini*, as it is sometimes named, by Girolamo da Montefiore is mainly drawn from Bernardino da Colpetrazzo ; not improbably from this chronicler's first account of the lives of saintly brethren which he wrote in 1575 at the command of Girolamo da Montefiore, then Vicar General.[7] Many manuscripts of this work exist in the Capuchin General Archives and elsewhere.

3°.—Other Writers not of the Capuchin Congregation.

In 1579 there was published in Venice : *Informatione del Reverendo M. Gioseppe Zarlino da Chioggia, Maestro di Capella della Serenissima Sig. di Venetia. Intorno la Origine della Congregatione de i Reverendi Frati Capuccini.* Zarlino's thesis was that the Capuchin Reform was initiated not by Matteo da Bascio but by Paolo da Chioggia. The book is of little historical value ; but it gained a certain importance,

[6] See also Sista da Pisa : *Storia dei Capp. Toscani*, I, p. 16.
[7] cf. Analecta Ord. Cap., XXIV, pp. 25-27.

inasmuch as it stimulated the Capuchin chroniclers to write of the origin of the Reform in reply to Zarlino's argument.

Valuable references to the origin and progress of the Capuchin Reform will be found in Luke Wadding's *Annales Ord. Frat. Minorum.* Wadding, though not always correct as to facts, was of a generous and impartial temper. References to the Capuchins are also to be found in Tossignani's *Historiarum Seraphicae Religionis Libri tres*, fol. 158, where he rebuts Zarlino's argument and ascribes the initiative of the Reform to Matteo da Bascio ; and in Francesco Gonzaga's *De Origine Seraphicae Religionis* (cf. p. 61). But, earlier than these three historians, Mark of Lisbon wrote an account of the origin of the Capuchins in his well-known *Chronicas de la orden de los frayles menores*, part III, published at Salamanca in 1570. An Italian version of this work was published at Venice in 1591 : *Delle Croniche de Frati Minori del P.S. Francesco. Parte Terza.* In this translation the account given of the Capuchin Reform was largely amplified by extracts from the third chronicle of Mario da Mercato-Saraceno. Boverius was castigated by Luke Wadding for claiming the authority of Mark of Lisbon for these interpolated passages.[8]

4°.—Other Documents.

A mass of official and private documents concerning the Capuchins in the Archives of the Vatican, in State Archives and public and private libraries, has yet to be brought to light and studied before a definitive history of the Capuchins can be written. A certain number of Pontifical Bulls and letters and other documents have been published in the *BULLARIUM ORD. FF. MIN. CAP.*; but the recent researches of P. Edouard d'Alençon have shown the necessity of an independent and more critical study of the original texts of the Pontifical documents for a true reading of Capuchin history. I can but refer the student in proof of this statement to the results of the patient scholarly research of the former Archivist General of the Capuchins, as published in *Tribulationes Ord. FF. Min. Capuccinorum primis annis*

[8] cf. Wadding *Annales*, anno 1525, XVI. But Wadding himself was in error in asserting that the interpolations were not in the first edition of the Italian version.

Pontificatus Paul III (Romae, 1914) and *De Primordiis Ordinis Fratrum Minorum Capuccinorum* (Romae, 1921).

Of first importance for a knowledge of the early days of the Reform are the *LETTERS OF VITTORIA COLONNA*, referred to in the text ; and the documents relating to the *VENETIAN CHAPTERS* of the Observants published by P. Edouard d'Alençon under the title: *Gian Pietro Caraffa . . . e la Riforma nell' Ordine dei Minori dell'Osservanza* (Foligno, 1912).

The publication by P. Edouard d'Alençon of the documents relating to the mission of San Lorenzo da Brindisi in connection with the Catholic League of Germany, throws much light upon a period of European history which is yet in need of fuller investigation. (Cf. *Analecta Ord. Cap.*, vol. xxv—*De Sancto Laurentio Brindusino documenta inedita*, p. 79, *eq.* ; and vol. xxvi, p. 133, *seq.*)

Much valuable information can be obtained from the histories of various Capuchin Provinces published in recent years and referred to in the text. Not all these " histories " fulfil the requirements of modern scholarship ; but some are of distinct value. The works of Padre Valdimiro da Bergamo concerning the Capuchins of the provinces of Milan and Brescia are a mine of information well documented and selected with critical judgment. The studies of Père Apollinaire de Valence concerning the French Capuchins, particularly those of Languedoc, are of the first rank in scholarship. Padre Sisto da Pisa, the historian of the Tuscan Capuchins, if lacking somewhat in critical judgment, is nevertheless a patient investigator and has the gift of presenting the results of his investigations in a pleasing literary form. The same may be said of Padre Bonaventura da Sorrento, the historian of the Neapolitan Province. Other more recent writers of provincial history have shown a distinct aptitude for original research.

Some valuable studies, too, have been published in various magazines, such as *Etudes Franciscaines*, *L'Italia Franciscana*, *Miscellanea Franciscana*, *etc.*

Nevertheless it must be said that the scholarly research study of Capuchin history is still in its infancy.

One branch of it—and in some ways the most important of all—the study of the works of the Capuchin writers, has

hardly yet been seriously attempted. No adequate authentic history of the Capuchins can be written until the works of their greater writers have been rescued from the oblivion into which they have been allowed to fall. You cannot know a people until you know their literature. The republication of the works of the Capuchin masters in thought is a necessary preliminary to a true knowledge of Capuchin history

APPENDIX II

LETTER OF VITTORIA COLONNA TO PAUL III

"Dieci anni sono che se comenzò questa sancta congregatione per vivere austeramente nella propria regola de San Francesco, et sempre con tutta la possibile repugnantia humana, causata da alcuni che han preso a destrugerla, e cressuta in fervore, numero et ordine, si che se vede el chiarissimo miracolo, ne se nega, ne se po negare, et van cercando se e facto in Sabbato.

"La religione ditta de la Observantia, non nega el R.do Generale et più gli altri frati, nei proprij brevi da loro expediti, che hanno necessità de reformarse, et che lo vogliono fare, et ha molto tempo che durano queste dilationi et promesse. Hor queste due propositioni: de la optima vita et observantia de questi reformati, et la necessità hanno quelli de reformarsi.[1] sono cose chiare, palpabili et certe, che solo quelli non le vedono che non le vogliono veder. Hor come e possibile dunque che se parli de meter questi, per longo spacio esperimentati in si rigorosa vita, a la obedientia de quelli, che essi medesimi confessano che non la possono fare. El pastore deve in lume, virtù, spirito et sanctità excedere le sue pecorelle, andarli con lo exempio vanti et condurle sempre a Dio piu vicine. Dunque ogni

[1] *Questi* everywhere in the letter signifies Capuchins, *Quelli* Observants.

pecorella di questa seria in merito, in perfectione de vita et in streteza de Regola superiore ad soj pastori ; et tante fatighe che X anni, con tanta gratia di Dio conservate, serian subito perdute, et la obedientia, ordinata per observare la Regola, seria casion de alargarla. Et per dirlo piu chiaro dico cosi :

"La Regola non e facta per la obedientia, ma la obedientia per la Regola, però se caminano per la via de Dio, con maxima observantia de la Regola, con obedire lo optimo Pontefice Paulo, non so che nove obedientie bisognino ; ultra che recognoscono el Generale de San Francesco de Conventuali, non per che sia meglio de l'altro, ma per che li lassa nella loro observantia et pace, non li proseque, non se li monstra inimico, non calumnia el ben fare, non va informando el mondo contra di loro. Et per che dicto Generale de Conventuali recognosce el Generale de li Observanti, questi vengono ad esserli subiecti mediate, se non immediate. Si che non esta el pensiero de costoro, non esserli subiecti, ma in conservar loro austera vita et vera observantia, como per experientia se é visto che questa sola se conserva, che non é in lor mano, et tutte le altre principiate da loro se sono alargate. Et essi medesimi dicono che trenta milia frati et non piu, che sono, é quasi impossibile reformarli. Dunche non so perché tanto esti encresce de questi pochi, che chiaramente monstrano posserlo fare. El cercare questo primato con tanta anxieta, precipitatione, é offesa de Dio, é etiam loro infamia, et un dare ad intendere che non fanno per zelo, ma per che perdeno el credito et le elemosine, vedendo si che questa vita vera de Sàn Francesco se pò fare ad ogni tempo.

"El ministro San Francesco hora lo chiama ministro, hora custode. La perfection de la seraphica et evangelica Regola non consiste in sillabe o dictione, ma importa bene che siano in verità ministri, et che, ad exempio de Christo, MINISTRENT SPIRITUM ET VITAM. Et cosi faciendo stare questi ad altra obedientia, quale se vede essere più larga, farria el Ministro el contrario del officio suo, per che li mitigaria el spirito et le togleria la radice de la vera Regola.

"El dire : volemo recognoscere el Generale, ma che non se gli impedisca la vita loro ; dunche questa seria vera ambitione et perfidia, et non servitio de Dio, metendoli in

periculo, dubio et fastidio, senza cambiare altro che la apparentia. Et per che anderiano primo per le selve, come son andati et come San Francesco prophetiza, che comportarlo. In questo non dirò altro.

"Reformensi quelli, attendano, mo che Christo esta al deserto, consideralo li et non impedire quelli che lo vanno imitando ; pensino che la quaresma viene, che deveno attendere che si gran Religione pasca el christiano grege. Comensino non dico a lassare cose de quali non se deve parlare, per che non é Capucino che non mettesse la vita per honor de la Religione, ma dico le cose chiare contra la Regola ; mettansi un poco nella vera austerità, povertà et umil vita, come San Francesco comanda, lasseno tante pompe, sumptuose fabriche, canti figurati et superfluità. Vedasse un poco de fervente spirito fra questi che li governano, sian veri pastori, entreno per la porta de la charità, non per la fenestra de la ambitione ; sian veri frati, guideno ben le anime che li son date in cura ; non voglian credere che non si possa quel che se vede si pò, et quel fece con piu austerità San Francesco et quaranta anni poi. Facian per opera cognoscere che li mena zelo optimo, et come seran reformati et li monstrarano bona voluntà, li obedirano, anzi el minor homo del mondo, per che vivan come loro. Tanto più che questi hanno optima, sincerissima, sancta, evangelica obedientia et mirabile ordine come ogni homo pò vedere. Et mandino pur Commissarij per li lochi, et li troverano come li primi compagni de San Francesco et la Regola in summa observantia. Et quando quelli et loro conventi serano tali, alhora potran dire FIAT UNUM OVILE ET UNUS PASTOR ; et il ministro sancto alhora (potrà dire) quel che precede al evangelio, EGO SUM PASTOR BONUS ; che stando le cose così, con lo ovile differente, non pò essere un solo ministro. Et però San Francesco vole che la sua Regola se observe, et questa é la importantia. Et sempre che se é tropo alargata ha mandato nove reforme. Et per che questa é la più perfecta et la più simile al suo principio, et trova el mondo più deteriorato, però ha più repugnantia et più difficultà de tutte le altre, si che veramente repugna a ogni christianità el tanto molestarli, che pare tutti quelli militano. Siano sancti et in pacifica observantia de la Regola, et ad questi soli se faccia tanta et sì continua guerra.

Immo sono obligati Sua Sanctità, li R. mi Cardinali, tutti principi et più il loro Protectore adiutarli et favorerli, come sola luce nelle nostre tenebre, et come quelli che soli in sì licentioso seculo observano la evangelica et divina doctrina de Christo et de San Francesco. Tanto più che tutti quelli che lassano li respecti humani et le complacentie terrene, et miran solo Dio vedeno la sua gratia in costoro, et le contrarietà nascere da pensieri né recti, né sinceri. Venuti ad tanto inganno che non curano calumniare il glorioso sancto, con dire che non fé habito, ma pigliò un panno, come se nella Regola non si distinguesse l'abito, o non se ne vedessero conservati per reliquie, et sigilli, et picture, et mille modi. Ma per che l'habito non fa la via bona lassarò stare queste impertinentie, ma solo pregarò Dio che li inspire ad reformarse, acciò che poj possino parlare con qualche fundamento. Ultra che senza le tante ragioni in fructo, se sono ancor de quelle che usano loro, cioè hanno la Bolla de Clemente, Brevi, approbation delli pontifici, et supra tutta la cognitione del optimo Papa Paulo, che Cardinale li defese, et però credo Dio lo sublimò, et mo Pontifice ama la verità ; ma va con tanti respecti che prevalgano contro lo intento sancto suo quelli che oppugnano, et per esserci Cardinali che la pigliano a denti, et l'un mal volentieri contradice al'altro in consistorio et a la presentia de molti Cardinali, che sono apena auditi, non che intesi. Ma Dio inspirerà i boni ad sì chiara intelligentia.

"Hor veniamo al prohibire che non vengano quei fratri ad questa reforma, per che se causa scandalo. Dunche lassi ogni uno de far ben per che causa scandalo ad chi non lo fa. Non si comporti più che i figlioli lassano i padri ed intreno in religione, per che a le loro case causa scandalo. Non se sofra più che da le religion de San Benedeto, de San Dominico et le altre vadino ad quella de San Francesco, per che ad quelli altri causa scandalo. Guastensi le lege tutte, non si consideri le parole de Paulo et de tanti sancti, che se deve tendere a la perfectione et eligere la vita più secura, et che la Regola de San Francesco é tale, immo de Christo, che bisognerebbe conversare con li angeli per pienamente observarla ; et costoro vogliono impedire lo andare a la perfectione, non recordandose che CUM SANCTO

SANCTUS ERIS, etc. Anzi é offitio de boni togliere tuti li impedimenti al santo vivere di questa reforma, la quale edifica et non da scandalo alli veri observanti. Anzi é certo che a la più parte de la religione dispiace questa prohibitione, legami, brevi et streteza. Et solo da molestia ad octo o X persone che governano, quali vogliono che per auctorità se li creda. Et se vede chiaro el poco motivo che fa la costor vita in quelli, che in tre mesi hor maj che sta la porta aperta non se ne sono venuti XX. Non sono oggi sî ferventi li spiriti che questa austerità piacia ad molti ; si che in chiuderla si fa grandissimo deservitio a Dio, per che si chiude la meglior vita a 3,000 anime,[1] quali tutti credeno che possano venire ; et de quanti, per essere impediti, nor sanno se ha de dar conto a Dio ; et in lassarla aperta ultra che se evade tanto periculo de offendere la divina voluntà et si observe ogni bona lege et costume. Se vede che non se fa danno alcuno per che qui se acceptano con tutte le cautele et consideratione del mondo, come Vostra Sanctità per alcune lettere ha visto che non son vere le falsità che li oppongano.

"Lassarò stare che li Observanti se separarono da Conventuali, et non hebbero tanta repugnantia, et fò optimamente facto ; che ha molti anni tutti seriano stati conventuali, che fra il molto fango non po'stare bianca la neve.

"Lassarò stare che non se deve ragionevolmente prohibire. Lassarò stare le cose humane cerca la informatione data ad Sua Magestà et molti altri, quali poj se admirano con intendere il vero. Lassarò stare che costoro humilmente non ardiscono dire la verità, et quelli si audacemente et non veramente gli oppugnano. Lassarò stare che questi non domandano niente, se non che se lasseno in la pace de Christo et che viva la evangelica libertà de recevere et observare QUI VENIT AD ME NON EICIAM FORAS. Et quelli demandano prohibitioni, legami, impedimenti et scomuniche, che par proprio contenda la legge de Moyse con la gratia de Christo, la carità con la ambitione, et la humiltà con la grandeza. Et veramente non me dole de questi che ponno ben dire QUIS ME SEPARABIT A CHARITATE CHRISTI, ma me dole de quelli che in tanta luce son cechi, et che

[1] *Supra* : " trenta milia frati."

tante volte habiano hauta invidia a quelli che servirono Christo in terra ; et ogni di diciamo : fortunati pastori, beati Magi, felice ab Arimathia, gloriosa Magdalena et Marta ; et poj habiamo le cose de Christo in terra chiare et vive, et la observantia de la sua evangelica vita, et le perseguitano. Et se vede questa povera congregatione ogni giorno abbassare la testa et humilmente dire CUR ME CAEDIS. Per amor de Dio non se metano tante nube intorno che adombrano la vera luce a la sancta bontà del Pontifice, che questo seria più presto pena a chi lo ama et più scandalo a tutta la christianità che cosa potesse succedere.

"Oyme ! come non tremeno quelli che le son contrarij ? Come ponno mai dormire, che non temano la justicia de Dio ? Como el verme de la conscientia non li rode tanto che ormaj desistano ? Che merito rendeno a Dio de la gratia che li fa ? O che conto gli darano che per loro non é restato de guastar un opera de reformare migliaa de persone, sapendo che per un anima sola Christo tornaria in terra de novo !

"Io non so che move questa cosa, si non tentatione. Tanti frati incogniti, tante religioni infructuose, che non se sa che nome habiano, tanti de San Joanne, tanti de San Francesco, che ogni di escono de la Observantia per farsi seculari preti, confessori, abbati, episcopi et cardinali, et nisciuna cosa offende, nisciuno dà scandalo et nisciuno importa, si non questa per che é la meglio de tutte. Sempre le cose de Christo et de soi servi han dato admiratione, conturbato gli respecti humani ; et desso medesimo dice NON VENI MITTERE PACEM. Dunche se deve lassare la austera, optima vita, divina reforma, per non causare scandalo a persone che governano ?

"O cum quanta certeza poteria monstrare che questo impugnare non é con la volonta de la religione de la Observantia ; e quanti monasterij fan fede che staban et de l'altra parte se dogliano che non stano. Anzi del prohibire nasce infinito scandalo ; provino per uno anno lassare la porta aperta, poj tante volte han provato el contrario, et vederano che maj dal bene nasce scandalo. Anzi ne nascerà vera reforma in quella, et optima confirmation in questa, et se parlarà al hora con più proposito.

"Certo non se po' admetere adesso nisciuna lor ragione ;

et dicono non ponno castigare li frati per che se ne saltano I QUI.[1] Dunche may l'altre religione han possuto castigare li frati loro, perche ponno andarsene ad San Francesco, che é più streta. Volesse Dio che movesse zelo de castigare et reformare, che attenderiano ad altro che a ruinar li reformati !

"Dio per sua bontà conservi la bona voluntà ai boni et la conceda a quelli che non l'hanno. Le cose del mondo sempre IN PRIMA FACIE APPARENT BONE, ma non restano al martello. Cosi le vision delectano in principio, più le false che le vere. Però, per amor de Dio, non se ne stian a relatione, gustino, intendano, pensino questa verità, che son certa l'intrarà nel core.

"Et perche, intendo, dicono addesso una nova cosa, cioé che son tutti reformati et che han ben visto et non han bisogno, et che se penteno de haverlo ditto ne i brevi ; et il General ad me et in mille lochi. Dico che Dio il faccia et che dico son tutti sancti. Io che ho vera noticia de tutti i loro monasterij del Regno et de Campagnia ne son chiara, et tutti el sanno se han bisogno de reforma. Ma sia come lor dicono, non negarano, o per dir meglio non ponno negare che la vita de Capuccini non si a austera, più stretta, et tale che chi non ha occhio nol vede, siché questa basta a negar la obedientia per le ragion sopra dicte et a far tocar con mano che é maximo errore dirlo et cosi chiuder la porta al venir a la più stretta vita."

THE CAPUCHINS AND THE SPIRITUALIST TRADITION

In 1924 P. Frédégand Callaey, the learned Archivist General of the Capuchin congregation, published in *Miscellanea Fr. Ehrle* an article entitled : "L' infiltration des idées franciscaines spirituelles chez le frères-mineurs capucins au xvi[e] siècle." The title is misleading. One might almost as well speak of infiltrations of Anglo-Saxonism among the English. For if the primitive chronicles of the

[1] Thus the reading in the MS. in Capuchin General Archives. Père Edouard d'Alençon suggests the reading " in questa."

Reform prove anything, it is that the Capuchins regarded themselves as the inheritors of the Spiritualist tradition. Not that they approved of all the spirituals in all their ways and deeds. Bernardino da Colpetrazzo, for instance, denounces the controversy carried on by the extreme rigorists in the fourteenth century as scandalous—"*la longa et scandalosa disputatione.*" Nevertheless, the early chroniclers all derived the Reform from St. Francis through the Spiritualist movement.

What the Spirituals hoped for, that the Capuchin Reform has accomplished—is their argument. It is to be noticed that just as the Spirituals relied for their justification upon the writings of the Saint's companions, so too do the Capuchins. Not only is this the case with the chroniclers; the Constitutions of the Reform equally do so (cf. *Le Prime Costituzioni*, Roma, 1913, p. 41). It is quite true, as Père Frédégand has well pointed out, that the ultimate argument upon which the Capuchins rested the justification of the Reform was the actual conformity of the Capuchin life with the letter of the Rule, in other words, their actual strict observance. That is the argument of Vittoria Colonna, already cited; and of Bernardino d'Asti in his memorial to a certain cardinal (*supra*). Still the documents prove that the Capuchins considered that the purer Franciscan tradition had been conveyed through the Spirituals and not through "the friars of the community."

The following document is given as illustrating the mentality of the Reform in the crisis which threatened its existence under Paul III (cf. *supra*). Incidentally, the document reveals that the relations between the Capuchins and Observants, even when they differed as to the justification of the Reform, were not always lacking a true and cordial fraternal regard. The document here given is taken from the chronicle of Bernardino da Colpetrazzo, the secretary and companion of Francesco da Jesi.

The argument of Francesco da Jesi is worked out with fuller detail in the *Historia Cappucina* of Mattia da Salo.

QUI SI RAGIONA COME IL VENERABILE PADRE F. FRANCESCO DA JESI DICHIARÒ AL PADRE FRATE FRANCESCO VENETIANO ZOCCOLANTE LA NOSTRA RIFORMA ESSER LA VERA RIFORMA SECONDO LE PROFETIE

Fu in quel principio gran contrasto nel corpo della Religione se la Congragatione de Capuccini era la vera riforma o no conforme alle profetiche de' Santi Huomini che di quanto nella Religione hanno profetizzato ; in questo contrasto fu il Venerabile Padre Francesco Venetiano custode della riforma de' Padri zoccolanti, il quale essendo per prima molto famigliare, e amorevole del Padre Fra Francesco da Jesi e per la gran sicurtà che con esso lui haveva essendo il Padre Frate Francesco da Iesi generale di tutta la nostra congragatione gli scrisse una lettera stando egli nel luogo di Monte Luco di Spoleti nella quale molto l'esortava che unir dovesse la congregatione de' Capuccini con la riforma de' Padri zoccolanti ; Io fui quello che gli mandai la detta lettera, cioè la risposta che gli diede il nostro Generale che questo era impossibile che la congregatione de' Capuccini si fosse mai unita con quella de' zoccolanti con molte altre parole efficacissime, ma non contento questo Padre di questa risposta venendo il perdono d'Ascesi nel quale si ritrovava il nostro generale si trasferì insino alla fraternita di Santo Lorenzo dentro in Ascesi dove si raccoglievano i Padri Capuccini io fui a quel perdono, e per sua gratia il Padre Generale che sempre mi portò grande amore, mi riferì ogni qualunque cosa riducendosi dunque a ragionare in una stanza dove dormiva il nostro Padre Generale, di nuovo quel buon Padre Frate Francesco Venetiano gli propose strettamente pregandolo che volesse far la detta unione aggiungendo che secondo la profetica, questa non era la vera riforma ne' per andare inanti, di piu disse : Egli : Noi abbiam cavata una bolla da SS della riforma più ampla che sia stata cavata mai. Il Padre generale nostro gli respose alle dette obietioni, e prima alla bolla così ampla : Sappiate Padre Fra Francesco che voi mai farete riforma tra zoccolanti e se voi aveste una bolla che la venisse dal Cielo e tutti i favori possibili humani, non sete mai per far riforma perfetta.[1]

Alla seconda della profetia che voi dite vi rispondo che vo vi ingannate in grosso, anzi, secondo la profetia questa nostra è

[1] *Se voj haveste* . : . queste parole non si verificano perchè infatti si trova la riforma tra zoccolo : onde si ha da intendere di far riforma inclusive tantum : cioé senza che havesse à durar la Capuccina. O' che la fatta non è perfetta ha comparatione della Capuccina admettendo l' uso largo nella suppellettile Sacra : et forse nell' habitatione.

vera riforma e accioche voi restiate capace tre profetie son famose nella franceschina che all' aperta dimostrano doversi far la riforma.

N.B.—Giovanni da Parma—la prima è questa : che dice che tre volte si toccaranno i ciuffoli e ciaramelle delle dottrine ne' mai si farà riforma ma di poi per spatio di qualche tempo la si farà e accioche voi intendiate, questa profetia si adempì al tempo d'Ubertino da casale del Beato Fre Gio ; Parma, di fra Adamo ; e di Fra Cesario, huomini letteratissimi e santissimi tre volte al tempo di questi Padri fu disputata la riforma, e mostrato il gran valore e le gran lettere di questi Padri ch' eran de' più zelanti, dotti, e santi huomini che fosse in tutta la Religione e comandò Sua Santità sotto pena di scomunicatione per Santa obedientia, che lor dovesser mettere in carta tutti quei passi della regola, che dalla Communità de' fri non si osservavano e così facero e quantunque disputando fossero superiori a gli altri e facesse toccar con mano a Sua Santità e agli altri che la riforma era necessaria, nondimeno non se ne potè venire al fine ma restorono quei Ven. Pdri in grandissima persecutione e odio fattagli da frati larghi e non poterono ottener cosa nessuna, poscia Frate Angelo chiarino, fre Liberale per gratia di Iddio, fecero la riforma e durante parecchi anni in gran santità. Eccoti dunque la profetia adempiuta e parendo a quei ven. Padri zelanti che per le gravi persecuzioni quella riforma desse al basso, permesse il Signore Iddio, e volse che il P. Fra. Paoluccio da Foligno, desse principio alla vostra riforma de Pdri Zoccolanti e questa fu la più ampla che sia stata mai.

Ci è un' altra profetia che dice : insino al B. Bernardo settimo grado cascherà la religione sempre da male in peggio nel settimo grado si farà la riforma nello spirito del fondatore e questa tal riforma sarà fatta da Frati semplici e idioti talmente che non si saprà che l'habbi fatta ; dopo la dispersione sarà la Congragation de' Frati Poveri nel terzo luoco, e apparirà in loro il segno della vera riforma, e saran certificati di tutto quello che han da fare. E qui ferma e dimostra, che questa sia l'ultima riforma la più vera e più perfetta. Nota ben tutte le parole e discorri bene i gradi della religione che in tutti questi gradi han fatto qualche mutazione e voi trovarete che ora noi siamo nel settimo grado, e questo ci favorisce la visione che ebbe il nostro Padre San Francesco della statua ; non racconterò ogni cosa perchè mi rendo certo che tutte queste cose le sapete, pigliate la parola dalla profetia che dice, negli ultimi giorni si farà la riforma nello spirito del fondatore, che vuol dire nello spirito di San Francesco e considerate bene, che ne' Zoccolanti, ne' mai nessuno altro che habbi fatta riforma si sia così ben con-

formato in tutto e per tutto con la vera osservanza della regola, come han fatto i Capuccini ripigliando miracolosamente il proprio habito del Padre San Francesco conforme nel colore nella vita nell' asprezza e nella forma dell' habito non variando un pelo. I luochi de' Capuccini conforme a quei primi luochi che al tempo del Padre San Francesco furono fabbricati. Non fù mai in nessuna riforma osservata cosi stretta e alta povertà universalmente come hora si osserva per gratia di Dio tra Capuccini. Eccovi dunque che lè fondata nello spirito del fondatore. Che sia stata fatta da huomini semplici voi ne siate informato benissimo chi sia Frate Matteo da Basci, Frate Lodovico e gli altri. Quel che dice dopo la dispersione, si è adempiuto tre luochi havevan preso i poveri Capuccini il luoco di Camerino, il luoco di Monte Campano che edificò la Duchessa di Camerino Catarina Cibbò e madre amorevolissima della nostra Congragatione, il terzo fu preso a un Castello posto nel dominio di Fabriano chiamato Alvaccina. Nota dunque bene Frate Francesco mio caro. I Cappuccini furono tutti dispersi per le gravi persecuzioni che non se ne trovava un coll' altro, e loro stessi ingenuamente confessano che mai si pensorono che la congragatione andasse inanti e sempre furono dubbi, ma quando fu cavata la bolla di Frate Lodovico gli raccolse tutti nella capanna d'Albaccina e loro terzo luoco e quivi celebrorono il lor prime capitolo generale, e come dicono tutti quei che ci si ritrovorono, sopravvenne miracolosamente in loro un lume soprannaturale che quella era la vera riforma e illuminati da Dio conobbero chiaramente che quella era opera di Iddio e che miracolosamente in tante persecutioni erano stati conservati da Dio e gli crebbe un animo tanto grande della vera perseveranza che da quello in poi parve che sopra di loro venesse lo Spirito Santo. Diedero forma di Religione alla picciola Congregationcella de' Capuccini, la divisero nei luochi coi loro guardiano e incominciorono alla scoperta a comparir per tutto. Eccoti che nel terzo luoco furon certificati ; fecero le loro constitutioni, e fu ordinatoil modo di vivere. Dice la profetia che sarà differente dal principio della religione in questo che alla Religione gli fu dato in principio il Capo Santo che fu San Francesco, ma à questa riforma l' harà in ultimo. E se voi ben considerate tutta quella profetia si è adempiuta nei Capuccini : la onde tenete per cosa certa che questa è la vera riforma e non si farà altra riforma. Però intendete bene quel che dice il Beato Frate Giacomo (Giacobo di Masa) che fu cosi altamente da Dio illuminato e particolarmente in quel fatto che egli ebbe, dove vedde tutta la religione mostratagli da Dio sotto forma d'un arbore grandissimo ove parla della contentione che nacque per santo zelo

fra quei doi Santi, il P. Frate Giovanni Parma e S. Bonaventura che dovendosi levare una gran tempesta e sbarbicar del tutto l'arbore vedde il beato Giovanni che stava nella cima perchè era generale partirsi da quel luoco sublime, e mettersi al basso e in luoco sicuro : e San Bonaventura fu posto nel suo luoco e questo ci dimostra che essendo il Padre Giovanni generale, rinuntiò l'offitio e fu assunto nel luogo suo il serafico San Bonaventura e levandosi una gran tempesta, del tutto sberbicò l'arbore, senza rimaner ne pure una brusca, e poscia vedde questo Santo huomo che delle radice del arbore nacque un germollo d'oro fino ; che altro vi dimostra esser sbarbicato l'arbore se non la persecutione valente che dagli heretici e male genti doveva esser fatta contro i religiosi e che dal tutto la religione sarà tolta dal pubblico e come revelò il N. S. Jesu Christo al P. Nostro San Francesco dietro alla tribuna di Santa Maria degli Angeli che Dio sarà tanto provocato ad ira dalla Religione, che darà piena potestà a i demoni che la perseguitino, e questa sarà quella persecutione che ivi dice il N. Signor che non si potrà portar l'habbito della Religione se non nei boschi o in terra d'infedeli. Passata questa gran persecutione quei pochi che restaranno saran tanto affinati, tanto contemplativi e tanto santi che di nuovo germoglieranno la perfetta e ultima riforma e questa ha da uscire da quei buoni Frati che saran ritrovati in vera osservanza della Regola : e si daran parimenti da Dio in quella riforma di perfetta osservanza della regola, e lo spirito della Santa Contemplazione e avvertite che ci è un' altra profetia che dice che in questa persecutione tutte le religioni saranno svolte eccetto la religione di San Francesco che ne resterà la terza parte dei buoni per la Santità del fondatore ; però non vi meravigliate se non vi par di vederci ancora un gran spirito, perchè dice il Padre Santo Francesco che questa riforma grandemente piacerà à Dio e sebbene non vi si vedranno opre di molta importanza, è questo dic' egli perche sarà raffreddata la carità la qual fece operare i Santi ferventemente ma perchè patiranno persecutioni dagli huomini cattivi e dai demoni, e molto saran combattuti di dentro e di fuori si come voi vedete esser stata la povera Congragatione de' Capuccini. Non di meno dice il P. S. Francesco quei che perseveraranno non saran privi de' meriti da' primi Santi e sappiate che non è dato ancor lo spirito che se darà doppo la persecutione, quando che ancor la Chiesa Santa si riformarà perfettamente allora si darà con ogni gradi di perfettione. A noi dunque poveri Capuccini ci basta pure assai a viver nella perfetta osservanza della regola e in tante tribolationi perseverare insino alla morte in questa Santa Congragatione. Andate dunque Padre mio carissimo e riposatevi

totalmente nel animo vostro che voi non vedrete mai questa Congregatione unirsi collo vostra riforma, ma dall' altro lato vi dico che per un Santo Huomo che habbiamo nella nostra Congragatione il N. S. Jesu Cristo ci ha fatto intendere a tutti che per spatio di alcuni mesi quasi ogni di è apparito a questo Santo huomo che questa è la vera riforma e che non ci è stato nella Chiesa di Dio nel qual più si sia compiaciuta la Maesta sua quanto nella Congragatione de' Capuccini. E di più ci ha rivelato, che tutti quei che vivono in questa Congragatione dissolutamente e che non vanno in verità, se non si emendano in breve tempo, Sua Maestà gli scaccerà dalla Congragatione ; e questo noi lo vediamo adempirsi a tutte l'ore che il Nostro Signore Iddio non ha rispetto ne ha lettere, ne ha nobiltà, ne' ha grandezze ma quei che non si fondano in unità e non si sforzano d'andar in verità nella vera osservanza della regola, tutti glie ne manda via e io non ho altra paura se non che Dio mi scacci per i miei peccati di questa Santa Riforma. Restate dunque chiaro fratello carissimo e sgombrate dal vostro intelletto tutte le tenebre che ne fan giudicare questa Santa Riforma non essere la vera riforma perchè noi ne' siamo certificati della profetia dalle revelationi, e quel che assai importa perchè l' è in tutto e per tutto conforme alla vera osservanza della regola. E di più che essendo così debole habbi fatto resistenza à contrarij così gagliardi che con tutto il lor potere mai l' han potuta buttar per terra, che segno è questo se non nella potente e valida man di Dio che contra l'opinion d'ognuno l'habbi così miracolosamente conservata : e vi dico che guai a quelli che cercheranno d'allargarla perchè sarann gravemente puniti ; Si partì questo Venerabile Padre tutto soddisfatto e con molte lacrime baciò le mani del Nostro Padre Generale.

Extract from a Sermon of Fra Girolamo da Narni on the text "Homo quidam fecit cœnam."

CONCIO HABITA PERUSIAE IN ECCL. S. LAURENTII DE CONVIVIO SUPERNAE GLORIAE SUPER LUCAE EVANG. (Romae, MDCII).

"*Homo quidam fecit coenam magnam et vocavit multos. Luc.*14."

"Postquam sapientissimus rerum omnium Opifex Deus, hominem a mundi principio, de limo terrae eductum, produxit in lucem, eumdem primo alloquens, de duobus potissimum secum disseruit; nimirum ut ingentem hominum multitudinem convocaret, atque ut advocatae ab eo multitudini, convivium pararet jucundissimis epulis exornatum:

Gen. 1, 28 Crescite (inquit) et multiplicamini, et replete terram et subjicite eam: et dominamini piscibus maris et volatilibus coeli, et universis animantibus, quae moventur super terram. Hoc est primum. Dixitque Deus, Ecce dedi vobis omnem herbam afferentem semen super terram et universa ligna, quae habent in semetipsis sementem generis sui, ut sint vobis in escam.

Gen. 1, 29 "Ecce secundum. Quamvis autem paratae hae dapes herbarum atque lignorum extrinsecus appareant viles ac minimi momenti; erant tamen (divinae ipsius Scripturae testimonio) exquisitissimae: quaeque non solum justum jucundissimorum saporum suavitate reficiebat sed ipsum etiam visum, eximia earum pulchritudine, mirum in modum delectabant. Sic enim Scriptura dicit:

Gen. 2, 9 "Produxit Dominus Deus de humo, omne lignum pulchrum visu et ad vescendum suave. Verum enim vero, si iis in rebus, latentibus quoque mysteriis animum admoveamus, longe amplius jucundiora atque praestantiora fuisse intelligemus siquidem, antiqua illa divinae sapientiae opera, foecundissima quaedam principia extiterunt, ac veluti seminaria earum postea rerum, quae Deus in hominum gratiam, praestare in fine temporum

decrevisset ; ut nimirum insignia illa beneficia, quibus humanum genus ornandum, honestandumque erat, eximiis quibusdam typis insculperentur. Quamobrem copiosam a mundi exordio multitudinem advocavit ; eique opiparum illud, lautumque convivium indixit : scilicet, ut intelligeremus illa majora pocula, pabulumque gloriae suavissimum, quibus veluti nectaris ambrosiaeque, deorum alimentis, uitrac postrema aurea aetate, felicissimaque qua degimus, servator ipse omnes munifice erat invitaturus. Venite (inquit) ad me omnes et ego reficiamvos.

Mat. xi, 28

" Angelus clamavit voce magna dicens omnibus avibus quae volebant per medium coeli : Venite, et congregamini ad coenam magnam Dei, ut manducetis carnes Regum. Homo quidam fecit cenam magnam et vocavit multos.

" O Vere inaestimabilem coenam, atque desiderabile convivium ; ubi non corruptibiles epulae proponuntur quae nativi caloris corrumpuntur igniculo : sed suavissimo divinae essentiae ferculo vesci licet, quae omnium delicatissimarum dapium iucundissima est, dum ineffabili modo in sempiternis subsistit divinis hypostasibus Patre nimirum, et Filio, ac Spiritu sancto. Qui omnes liberalissimi convivatores, felicibus illius gloriae conviviis veluti procincti, concordissime in illa mensa ministrant. Non ulla (mihi credite) lingua explicare valeret, neque mens ulla penitus comprehendere (sicut ait Gregorius) quanta supernae felicitatis illa sint gaudia : gloriae conditoris semper assistere : incircumscriptum Dei lumen cernere : nullo mortis metu affici : et incorruptionis perpetuae munere laetari. . . . .

" Illud igitur in primis constituendum est, videlicet, Deum optimum maximum, fontem esse perennem, et inexhaustum, omnia continentem quae in aliis cunctis creatis rebus dispersa, ac veluti profusa inveniuntur. Quidquid enim in creaturis reperitur, quibus aliquid deest, simul in Creatore esse necesse est, cui nihil deest, aut

deesse potest. Quamobrem, cum nemini, alteri dare liceat quod ipse in se primo non habet, consequens est, Creatorem omnium Deum, qui omnibus rebus aliis modum, speciem et ordinem, numerum, pondus, atque mensuram ; unitatem veritatem ac bonitatem ; essentiam, virtutem operationem ; causam subsistendi, intelligendi rationem, ordinemque vivendi est elargitus ; in sese omnia, praestantissimo modo scilicet eminenter colligere ac comprehendere. Sicut enim fulgentissimum solis iubar, licet reliquis astris, quae sunt in firmamento, lunae etiam, ac ceteris planetis communicetur, in ipso tamen sole, opulentioribus radiorum thesauris, quam simul in omnibus coelorum orbibus habitat : sic Deus, qui caput est, fons et origo cunctarum creaturarum rerum, in se uno bonis omnibus, universisque, creaturarum excellentiis manet cumulatissimus. Itaque in ipso est omnis herbarum ac foliorum species ; florum item venustas et elegantia ; pulchritudo colorum atque gemmarum ; argenti et auri micantissimus splendor ; fluminum ac fontium formosa claritudo ; solis ac lunae, ceterorumque astrorum incredibilis fulgor ; avium suavissimi concentus ; silvarum delectabilis amoenitas ; ac bellitudo camporum universa. Unde in psalmo ipse idem dicit : Pulcritudo agni mecum est. Hoc igitur in primis fundamentum, subsequentibus gradibus jaciendum.

Ps. 49

" His igitur omnibus gradibus constitutis, alacriter usque ad Dei vultum ascendamus ; summum quidem illius pulchritudinem contemplaturi ; ac suavissimum ferculum divinae illius faciei, omnium aliarum dapium pretiosissimarum jucundissimum, perpetuo comesturi. Atqui ab infirmis rebus summamus exordium, quae nullum alium in natura nobilitatis gradum, praeterquam ipsum esse sunt consecutae. Huius modi sunt coeli, et elementa, ac universa mista inanimata ; sive ligna illa sint sive lapides sive cuiusvis generis metalla. His omnibus superiora sunt illa omnia quae vegetandi virtute praedita sunt : Et rursus, vegetantibus

sensibilia ipsa antecellunt, quae sensum ac motum prioribus superaddunt. Quibus tamen omnibus homines praeferuntur qui suas actiones industria et ratione moderantur. Etenim homo cunctarum est epitome creatarum rerum ; qui in se uno complectitur coelorum esse, aplidum atque gemmarum, virentium herbarum et arborum vegetationem ; sentiendi virtutem animalium: ac denique intelligendi vim, quae homini proxima est, ac eum separet a cunctis aliis rebus, quibus non est communis humana natura. Sed quid in iis demoramur explicandis minutiis infirmarum ac sublunarium rerum ; quo minus mundana omnia praetergressi, ad caelestium usque sedes contemplatione evecti, ingentem illum exercitum fereque innumerabilem beatarum mentium consideremus ? Quandoquidem vel una tantum, eademque inter ceteras minima, tam mire et excellenter superat cunctas naturas corporeas, ut in se omnem sublunarium perfectionem eminenter contineat ; ac insuper illam forman, illud decus illamque elegantem pulchritudinem, quam sua ipsius natura sibi ipsi determinat. . . . .

" Qualis igitur (auditores) erit haec coena Sanctorum ?

" Porro si unius forma mulieris atque venustas, tam mira virtute viget ad rapiendos animos, ut saepe homines vel insanire faciat, vel marcescere. Si itidem Trojani principes (referente Fabio) Proceresque Graecorum, non indigne tulerunt, tot mala sustinere longissimi temporis, tot mortes, tot pericula, tot clades immanissimi belli, ne sola unius Helenae forma privarentur. Quin etiam rex ipse Priamus decennio bello propemodum exhaustus, amissis tot liberis, ac summo imminente discrimine Regni totius et vitae, cui faciem illam (ex qua tot lacrymarum origo defluxisset) invisam, atque abominandam esse oportebat ; audit haec, suisque ipsius oculis intuetur. Ac nihilominus presens Helenae forma ita animum illi demulcet, gratiamque conciliat, ut omni subducta rabie, qua

poterat crebrescentibus cladibus excandescere, iuxta se tam placide collocaret, blandisque verbis compelleret ut filiam, ac excusationem afferet, quo minus eorum malorum ipsa se esse causam arbitraretur. . . . .

" Quid vero de corporeis sensibus deque eorum praestantia vel delectatione referam ? Qua lingua, quibusque verbis explicari valerent inaestimabiles deliciae quibus afficientur ? Enimuero, Beatorum faucibus dulcis ac perjucundus humor continue inerit : Aures vero musicis semper numeris, ac suavissimis Angelorum concentibus replebuntur : Oculi eorum, splendentia gloriae corpora perpetuo intuebuntur. Olfactus pergratissimus fruetur odoribus ; non qui ex floribus, vel aliis pigmentarii suffimentis emitti solent, sed iis, qui ex intima beatorum corporum missione egredientur. Quamvis enim nullus ibi extraneus possit esse odor, qualis est apud nos fructuum vel pigmentorum, ipsa tamen gloriosa corpora, ob temperatissimam primarum qualitatum complexionem ; summo odore fragrabunt : erit enim stomachus plenus odorifera substantia, ac reliqui omnes humores suavissimum odorem redolebunt. . . . .

" Nec illi deest formossimi loci delectabilis amoenitas ; quippe quae in superno coelorum vividario est exornata. Adest propterea benignissimus hospes videlicet Deus, qui eos incredibili comitae ad Convivium excipit. Adsunt dapes et pocula, tam pretiosa quam varia, qui sunt distincti gradus coelestium gaudiorum, qui singulis beatarum mentium, pro dignitate vel meritis retribuuntur . . . ministri quoque illius sacrae mensae innumerabiles sunt, ac ingenti decore, cum affabilitate cohonestati, de quibus Daniel ait: Millia millium ministrabant ei et decies millies centena millia assistebant ei. Ibi convivantium aures suavissimis cantibus demulcentur, uti Joannes in Apocalypsi : Vocem quam audivi, etc. . . . .

Dan. 7

Apoc. 14

Paratus denique est pincerna, Christus praecinget se et faciet illos discumbere, et transiens minis-

trabit illis. Nil amplius certe superest quam manus abluere. Extergite jam sordes actium impiorum, et expurgate poenitentiae lacrymis, ut tandem discumbatis in mensa Sanctorum. Nam secundum puritatem manuum mearum retribuet mihi.

" Tu qui cuncta scis et vales,
Qui non pascis his mortales :
Tuos ibi commensales,
Coheredes et sodales
Fac sanctorum civium. Amen."

EXTRACT FROM THE SERMONS OF FRA MATTIA DA SALO

Delli Dolori Di Gesù Cristo

PREDICA III, PARTE II

. . . Perche ne il Diavolo in lui haveva alcuna potestà, ne il Giudice in lui trovò cosa degna di morte. Et nondimeno egli sopportò la persecutione, et riceve la morte ; per far conoscere al mondo la sua carità, et la sua obedienza verso il Padre. Così l'amore, che porta a noi, lo spinge a patir per noi : l'amor che porta al Padre, lo spinge a patir per noi, per obedientia sua. Di maniera, che la carità verso noi et verso il Padre, e il fonte della passione : il quale per cagione del Padre scorre, qual abundante fiume, per lo vaso della obedientia : cosa che fa richissima et ornatissima di celeste eccelenze questa santa passione. Pondera ben Milano, questa obedientia. Quando nell' horto il Signor nostro pieno di tristitia, pregava, "Pater mi, si possibile est, transeat a me Calix iste" ; pienamente et distintamente tutto quello egli vide, che a patire havea ; et però cotal patire a lui, quasi presente, veduto, égli chiamò : "Questo calice ; cioè quello che innanzi all'occhio della sua mente si rapresentava. Hora pregando prima, che così fatto patire levato gli fosse ; et poi accetando per fare non la sua, ma la volontà del Padre ; pruova manifesta egli fa, che la paterna volontà del Padre ; pruova manifesta egli fa, che la paterna obedientia, alla passione et alla morte, non si stese solo in commune ; come se il Padre havessegli solamento comandato, che morisse in Croce ; ma tutti gli atti ella espressa della passione, tutti i successi, tutti gli accidenti ; et cosi tutti i dolori ad uno, ad uno distinti, et specificati. Di maniera che cosi come con tanti chiodi gli comando, che fosse crocifisso ; cosi che tante spine gli havessero a trasfiger il capo, et con tanti colpi di flagelli havessi il suo corpo ad esser ferito et lacerato, ne gli assegnati luoghi del corpo : ove haveano le spine ad esser fitte nel capo, et i flagelli a percotere il corpo con tanta grandezza di colpo, di ferita, et di dolore. Cadde sotto la medesima obedientia, il numero, la qualita, la gravezza delle ingurie, che gli furono

dette e fatte : col tempo, col luogo, con la determinata assignatione delle persone, che intervenir vi dovevano : ò ad esserne auttori, ò ad approvarle, ò farle maggiori con la presentia. Conteneva quella parimente tutto quello, che esso figlio di Dio havea in queste occorrenze da fare, e da dire : e la quantita e la qualita della pena e cordoglio che n'havesse a pigliare e dentro all'animo e fuori nel corpo. Et tutto in somma quel che in fatti intravenne, che apportasse dolore a Christo ; era a lui commandato dal Padre, e tutto da lui fù, con voluntà e effetto obediente, abbracciato. No vi avertite, che egli stesso l'accennò dicendo. Et sicut mandatum dedit mihi Pater sic facio ? Se ei fece in quella stessa maniera, che gli havea il Padre comandato ; adunque tutte le cose, col modo di quelle che egli patendo operò, caddero sotto l'obedientia. Una che ve ne fosse mancata, non havrebbe egli compitamente fatto come il precetto paterno conteneva, ne havrebbe potuto dire con verità ; *Opus consummavi, quod dedisti mihi ut faciam.* Et però sul fine liberamente disse. Consummatum est. O eccelenza rarissima della Passione di Christo, ò nobilissima santita de suoi dolori. L'obedientia tutti li adorna, tutti li arricchisse tutti li fa di virtù mirabile oltra mondo. Aggiunge l'apostolo all'obedientia l'humiltà, perche questa obedientia si distese a d'una humilissima operatione. Che quantunque l'obedire non sia mai senza humiltà, perche chi altrui obedisce, a lui si humilia ; allhora nondimeno più l'humiltà risplende, quando in atti humilissimi e in vilisime operationi si ubbidisce. E humiltà di obedientia anco il ricevere un' honore, e una dignità, o in fare operatione honorata e gloriosa ; come di predicare, di orare, di combattere, di fare una eccelletissima pittura, cose che apportano honore. Ma possi per obedientia una persona grande, e nobilissima, a servire all'Hospedale, ne i piu vili esercitii, che vi s facciano ; sopportare di esser un santo e virtuoso, tenuto per un gran scelerato, e per un infame ; morire l'innocente per mano di giustitia, ingiustissimamente ; della piu vergognosa morte, che s dia a i maggiori ribaldi ; con riputatione e stima di tutti, che quella codannagione sia giusta ; Questo è grandissima humiltà, e perche é obedietia, e perche l'opra per se è bassissima ignominiosa, e tutta dishonore. Tale, e molto più di quello si puo dire, e pensare, e stata

la Passion di Christo ; e però illustrissima di infinita oscurità di bassezza, e di humiltà. Hor ecco quelle sacratissime parole di S. Paolo ! *Cum in forma Dei esset, non rapinam arbitratus est, esse se aequalem Deo ; sed semetipsum exinanivit, formam servi accipiens. Humiliavit semetipsum, factus obediens usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis.* Apparisce pur l'humiltà etiandio nel modo del patire, il quale è tutto vile, mansueto, benigno, humile. Non si mostra il mansueto. Agnello ansioso di manifestar la sua innocenza, sol fà, quanto il Padre gli commanda, per ammonire i persecutori e far accorti gli altri. Asppetta di essere da altri giustificato. Cosi giusto lo confessano, çiuda che l'ha tradito, Pilato che'l condanna, e la moglie del Giudice : la quale gli manda a dire, Nihil tibi et iusto illi. Et all'ultimo il Centurione che dice a pié della Croce ; *Vere hic homo justus erat.* Non s lamenta de'torti, che gli son fatti ; ma o tace, o parla humilissimamente. Quello adempiedosi, ch'egli prima nel. Salmo havea predetto ; Ego autem tamquam surdus non audiebam, e sicut mutus non aperiens os sum, e non habens in ore suo redargutiones. Non minaccia, Qui cum male diceretur no maledicebat; cum pateretur, non comminabitur. Et tutti i gesti' i costumi, i garbi, le parole, li sguardi, tutto di humiltà risplende, O nobile virtù, molto a questi santi dolori convenevole. Questa fa singolare l'obedientia, la quale obedientia illustra la carità, e tutte tre santificano i dolori di Christo. De quali la carità è la fonte onde nascono ; l'obedientia, è canale, per dove scorrono : e vaso e l'humiltà, ove son ricevuti. L'altra virtù, che a queste s'aggiungne, per far il quadro perfetto è la patientia e fortezza, la quale ogni aversità costantissimamete sopporta. Onde e all'Agnello, e alla pietra, e il buon Gesu rassomigliato. All'Agnello, che non s'accende ad ira, contra chi lo so fa e porta al macello : onde e da Isaia Profeta, e da Gio. Battista, e chiamato Agnello ; e Geremia in figura di lui già disse : *Ego quasi Agnus mansuetus, qui portatur ad victimam.* Alla pietra è rassomigliato, per la invicibile e inconcussa fortezza sua : Uditelo in Isaia. *Dominus Deus aperuit mihi aurem, ego autem non contradico : Retrorsum non abii ; corpus meum dedi percutientibus, et genas meas vellentibus : faciem meam non averti ab increpantibus, et conspuentibus in me : Dominus Deus auxiliator meus, ideo non sum confusus, ideo posui faciem*

meam, ut petram durissimam, et scio, quoniam non confundar. Vedete, come la patientia ancora viene dall'obedientia? Dominus Deus aperuit mihi aurem : ego autem non contradicere retrorsum non abii. Ne hò dice egli, all'obedientia replicato ne punto mi son ritirato di farla : havendomi Iddio stesso aperto l'orecchio ad ogni suo precetto, per lo quale hò alle percosse offerto il mio corpo, le guancie alle guanciate il volto a'sputi, la barba a chi me la pela : e confortato dal Divino aiuto, a guisa di durissima pietra, ho posta la faccia mia. O invittissima patientia, o insuperabile fortezza. Ecco i quattro cantoni, e le quattro corna dell' Altare, ove si e fatto questo gratissimo sacrificio dell' Agnello immaculato: la carità, la obedientia, la humiltà, la patientia. Le due prime sono come cause, le ultime come effetti, o come circosttanze, e modi del patire. La Carità e la Obedientia hanno lo mosso a pigliare i dolori : Con Humiltà e con Patienta li ha presi, portati, e sopportati. La Carità nel cuore, l'Obedientia nell'opera : Humilta in se, la Patientia congli altri. Infinite sono le virtù, compagne e ornamenti di questi santissimi dolori : perche l'effetto loro e la distruttione di tutti quanti peccati, contra la cui caterva conbattono le sante virtu. Ne è virtu Christiana e vera, che a noi non derivi da questo sacro fonte de i dolori di Gesù Signor nostro. Adunque in lui primiera e nobilissimamente sono le celesti virtù.

Ma le quattro nominate sono le basi della Passione, e di tutte le altre perfettione di quella. I fonti di quella non potevano essere ne piu nobili, ne più eccelsi, ne più generali, ne più potenti, ne più santi di questi due, che sono la carità e l'obedienza. . . .

EXTRACTS FROM P. YVES DE PARIS :

La Théologie Naturelle

I

Discourse Apologetique

La raison naturelle est le dernier effort de nostre puissance, qui attend sa perfection de celle de Dieu, et une disposition

que nous deuons apporter pour recevoir la faveur de ses lumiers : Parce que soit en la grace ou en la nature, Dieu n'assemble pas ordinairement les choses extremes, sans les faire venir aux aproches dans un milieu qui en appaise la contrarieté. Or la raison est moyenne entre la premiere Verité divine et l'ignorance du mode materiel : C'est donc par son entremise que les creatures dont elle fait l'horison, se reünissent à leur origine, et l'homme à Dieu. Voicy l'explication de ce mystere. Le Verbe eternelle, cette source inepuisable de lumiers, se communique premierement aux esprits bienheureux, et leur donne une tranquille etendue de toutes les connoissances qui seruent a leur felicité ; puis il repand son rayon, et met son portraict dessus les corps ; il esclate dans les Astres ; il eclaire dans le feu ; il brille dans les pierreries ; il se rend adorable dans les beautez ; il commande dans les instincts des brutes et des plantes ; et termine enfin son abaissement en l'ordre du monde, qui est l'image de la raison, en la transparence de l'air et de l'eau, et en la diversite des couleurs qui nous rendent les objets visibles. De là ce rayon divin voulant remonter à son principe, il gagne nos sens par les delices de tous ces objets ; qui donne de l'amour à la raison, et l'oblige à la recherche de la veritable beauté, dont le monde n'est que le tableau. Et comme la volonté soupire apres ce souverain bien, comme l'entendement cherche son repos dans la premiere verité, l'ame deja relevee au dessus des choses mortelles, n'a plus besoin que d'un petit rayon de la Foy divine, qui l'unisse à Dieu, et luy donne le moyen de clorre ce beau cercle de lumiere par son retour dans le Verbe.

De cette union naist la ressemblance ; parce que, comme le soleil enuoyant son rayon sur la glace d'un miroir qui a déja d'elle-mesme quelque éclat, y fait un nouveau ciel où il peint sa face ; ainsi quand la Foy suruient à la raison naturelle, elle perfectionne l'image de Dieu dans l'ame, et l'éleue à une condition qui raporte au principe de la verité. Toutes choses sont une dans l'idee de Dieu ; et l'ame eclairee de cette double lumiere, decouvre une mesme raison dans les mysteres de la Foy, et la conduite du monde ; si bien que faisant en elle-mesme le rapport de ces choses

qui paroissent si differentes, elle s'approprie la Religion, et consacre la Philosophie.

Si nous pouvions atteindre ce poinct, de montrer que la Foy n'a rien de directement contraire à la raison, qu'elle est d'une mesme intelligence, pour nous porter à l'adoration de Dieu ; nous attirerions tout le monde à l'Eglise, parce que la raison naturelle est une en tous ; et en faisant le mariage avec la Foy, nous metons tous les hommes qui tiennent de ces deux parties, dans une mesme alliance. Au contraire, si la Foy declare une guerre ouverte à la raison, que d'un empire absolu elle fasse passer ses loix sans gaigner le consentement par quelque sorte de deference ; elle irrite les esprits et reueille la passion, où les hommes s'emportent pour la deffence de leur liberté. Les Roys ne diminuent rien du droit de leurs Sceptres quand ils font verifier leurs Edits aux Parlements, afin de les faire recevoir avec moins de contradiction du peuple, luy faisant paroistre qu'ils ne se seruent de leurs puissances qu'avec toutes les considerations de la Justice.

. . . . .

Je croy que nous voyons un grand nombre de Libertins, parce que le malheur de nostre siecle condamne une profonde science comme des reveries de Philosophe, et veut reduire toute la doctrine aux premieres aprehensions qu'on a d'un sujet. Peut-estre que les esprits qui ne peuvent porter le travail necessaire à la recherche de la verité, donnent cours à ces opinions pour se flater dans leur impuissance ; ou que l'interest du corps, pour lequel se traittent toutes les affaires du monde, partage trop avantageusement le temps, et n'en laisse pas assez à une estude, qui trauerferoit ses plaisirs, par la retraite, et par les reproches dont elle persecute les consciences coulpables ; ou bien parce que les hommes ayant commencé leurs connoissances par les sens, ils se treuvent engagez par une mauvaise coutume a suivre toujours leur conduite, sans prendre conseil de la raison. Enfin parce qu'ils se laissent tellement emporter à la violence de leurs passions, que leur course qui devance le vol du temps, et precipite leur vie, ne leur permet en passant qu'une veue confuse de ce que les choses naturelles

monstrent au dehors, sans s'informer de leurs qualitez, de leurs sympathies, quel est leur principe, et quelle est la fin generale et particuliere où elles pretendent.

C'est pourquoy, pour donner quelque remede à ces grands abus, i'ai dessein d'arrester les esprits sur l'exacte consideration des merveilles de la Nature, d'entrer dedans ses conseils, d'examiner ses conduites, et ne laisser point de partie au monde, dont nous n'apprenions les qualitez et les sympathies. Cette contemplation nous fera voir les choses sensibles d'un autre œil qu'elles ne paroissent au commun des hommes. Par tout nous admirerons une secrete puissance qui soutient leurs vies, qui perfectionne leurs estres, qui anime leurs actions : nous nous trouverons enuironnes d'une lumiere infinie, et parmy les ravissemens de nostre esprit, nostre cœur ne pourra refuser de profondes adorations à la Majesté divine.

Ie scay bien que plusieurs ont raporté sur cete matiere les raisons dispersees dans les Liures des anciens, et entassees dans les thresors de la Theologie ; mais parce qu'ils ne les expliquent qu'avec des termes qui tiennent beaucoup de l'Escole, elles sont comme ces gros diamans bruts, et qui n'ont pas encore receu le poly ; de grand prix et de peu d'eclat. Come il n'y a que les maistres des sciences qui reconnoissent la beauté de ces discours, les esprits communs demeurent confus dans la generalité des propositions, et prennent les consequences particulieres qu'on en tire pour un ieu de paroles dont ils se gaussent, et pour un artifice qu'ils pensent vaincre en luy opposant une negative sciences.

C'est pourquoy nous deguiserons ce que la Philosophie a de rude, afin de gagner les esprits rebelles autant par condescence que par la necessité du raisonnement, et terminer le combat par une victoire, qui seroit moins glorieuse pour nous, si elle n'estoit agreable à nos ennemis.

. . . . .

La curiosité naturelle que nous avons de scavoir une grande diversité de choses, n'est pas satisfaite du rapport que nous font les sens des objets exterieurs, si la raison n'en concoit les causes, et ne va reconnoistre les effects iusques dans les intentions de leurs principes. Cette passion de

scavoir la raison de tout, est si forte dans les grands esprits, que l'estude qui la contente leur tient lieu de toutes les delices du monde ; et au contraire, son ignorance leur est une gehenne insupportable. C'est pourquoy un Philosophe se precipita dedans l'Euripe, par un desespoir de ne pas entendre la cause de ces reflus si reglez en leurs inconstances ; et l'autre aima mieux mourir en se laissant consommer aux flammes du mont Ethna, que de viure et ne pas scavoir comment cet embrazement se pouvoit entretenir sans consommer sa matiere. Mais apres que nostre esprit a fait ses courses dans l'ordre du monde, qu'il a descouvert les artifices de la Nature, et la dependance de ses parties ; il doit arriver iusques à une premiere cause, qui serue de port à ses penibles recherches, comme elle est le principe et la fin de tous les estres. Autrment de s'arrester à une cause finie sans passer plus autre, ce seroit admettre le vuide dans le monde, et dans nostre connoissance ; terminer le long chemin des estudes par un precipice ; et n'avoir beaucoup appris, que pour moins scavoir.

. . . . .

De la Beaute et de L'amour (*Chapitre xxvii*)

Comme les perfections de l'unité divine, dont nous avons parlé, ne se peuvent concevoir, parce qu'elles font dans l'infiny ; ainsi de l'union des choses corporelles qui en est l'image, il naist un certain lustre que nous appellons beauté, si ravissante entre les objets sensibles, que nostre raison a trop peu de force pour expliquer sa nature, et pour se defendre de ses charmes. Elle paroist premierement sur les choses, dans l'union desquelles la diversité se rend remarquable, comme en l'email des pres, dans les bigarures de l'iris, aux plumes changeantes des oyseaux, aux taches des pantheres, aux jaspes, les differences des proprietez, des mouvemens, des effets qui font les coloris du tableau de la Nature. C'est ce qui fait que nous recevons de la complaisance au recontre des lieux champestres, des solitudes sauvages, des jardins irreguliers, des voyages en plusiers païs, des sciences melées ; et c'est pourquoy l'inconstance se

nourrit du flus et reflus de ses opinions, qu'elle fait son plaisir de sa misere, en agreant des defauts qui luy monstrent des nouveautéz.

Mais la beauté est dans un degré de plus haute perfection, et elle enuoye des attraits bien plus penetrans, quand les qualitez des corps forment une union si estroite, et un melange si accomply, que du rencontre de ce qu'elles ont de rare, il en rejalit un lustre qui ne monstre point de diversité. Un fin diamant qui n'eclaire pas seulement de la fade et blesme lumiere du crystal, mais dont les esclats sont vifs, et qui bluete d'un feu vigoureux, satisfait beaucoup plus la veuë que les changeantes couleurs des opales, et la marqueterie des porphires. Les contentemens de l'estude ne sont point solides, et ses emplois ont moins de travail que de plaisir, si l'on ne void dans des principes generaux ceux des diverses sciences, ou s'embarassent les esprits vulguaires. Ainsi les lis et les roses mignardement meslées sur le poly d'un visage bien compasse par les mains de la Nature, donnent jour a cette douce beauté, dont les hommes se sont fait un impitoyable idole, qu'ils croyent ne pouvoir estre seruie que par le sacrifice de leurs libertez et de leur cœurs.

. . . . .

Toutes les autres passions naturelles ne se piquent que pour des objets qui soustiennent l'estre, qui flattent les sens de qualitez rapportantes au temperament de leurs organes, et pour des actions importantes à leur conservation : la beauté n'a rien de ces appas mercenaires : ses attraits sont purs ; elle n'est aymee que pour elle-mesme, et si elle gaigne les cœurs sans leur promettre de l'utilité, c'est parce qu'elle est une image du bonheur ou nous devons posseder toutes les delices sans indigence. On ne seroit pas prodigue de ses biens, de sa vie, de sa reputation pour ce seul respect, si elle n'estoit une image, et si elle n'auoit quelques traits du souverain bien.

. . . . .

Il ne nous est pas possible d'euiter ces impertinences, et iustifier les desseins de la Nature aux mouvemens qu'elle nous imprime, si nous n'adorons une souveraine Beauté,

sans composition, sans defaut, eternelle, immuable, toute acte, toute vertu, toute perfection ; qui dans une Unité infinie, comprenne toutes les excellences, et tous les charmes dont les choses materielles monstrent les assais : c'est elle qui par une complaisance eternelle, est tout ensemble à elle-mesme le principe et l'objet de son amour. C'est elle, qui par sa fecondité fait couler les Estres dans la Nature, et qui les rappelle par sa bonté, en estant et le principe et la fin, par un cercle de lumiere qu'elle continue sans interruption. Si les beautéz mortelles ont des attraits, c'est parce qu'elles sont l'image de ce principe. Nos ames qui tiennent le degré superieur de la Nature, et qui ne doivent avoir de l'amour que pour ce dont elles peuvent tirer de la perfection, ne se monstreroient pas si passionées pour ces objets perissables, si ce n'estoit que leur lustre rapporte à l'idée qu'elles ont d'une beauté originaire, et qu'en son absence elles tirent da la consolation de voir son image.

De la vient que les premieres flammes de l'amour paroissent innocentes, et que ses premiers feux portent les courages à de genereuses entreprises. Elles reveillent l'ame des langueurs de l'oisiueté, luy donnent l'invention des sciences, des arts, la politesse des moeurs, et y produisent les mesmes effets qu'on dit avoir este repandus par la lumier sur l'ancien chaos. En ce commencement l'amour se contente de luy mesme : sa fin, c'est d'aymer, et ses mouvemens n'eschappent jamais à la raison, que quand ils la passent par des excez qui luy font voir quelque chose de divin dans l'objet aymé, et qui la tiennent dans une suspension de puissance, comme si elle estoit en possession du souverain bien. Mais cette pureté s'altre bien tost par les secondes affections qui touchet les sens et les appetits dont la Nature assortit les animaux pour la conservation de l'espece. Neanmoins de quelques artifices que cette passion devenue brutale, couvre ses ardeurs ; de quelques charmes et de quelques voluptéz qu'elle les anime, les amans reconnoissent leur servitude, si ce n'est par le libre discours de la raison, au moins par la gesne de ses sentimens : Ils arrousent leurs plaisirs de larmes, les gemissemens et les inquietudes troublent leur repos ; ils palissent comme des coulpables, et leur ioye n'est qu'un symptome de leur phrenesie. Car

comme le corps animé souffre continuellement une secrette douleur sous la violence des contraires qui le composent : ainsi l'ame endure d'estranges convulsions par ces amours illegitimes, qui combattent ses naturelles inclinations.

. . . . .

Il n'est pas possible que le courage de l'amour ne croisse à la veue continuelle de son objet, estant animé par tant d'attraits et tant de faveurs : aussi la force surmonte toutes les difficultez, et gaigne autant de victoires qu'elle a d'entreprises. La premiere et la plus signalee, c'est d'appaiser les revoltes des passions, de mettre la paix dedans l'ame, et d'y faire recevoir les ordonnances du Ciel sans contredit. C'est, peut-estre, ce que signifie la Planete de Venus, qui paroissant de moins forte complexion et n'ayant en propre qu'une humidité obeissante, arreste neanmoins les fougues de Mars, et corrige l'impetuosité de ses influences. On se plaint ordinairement que les passions troublent l'ame, qu'elles ostent le conseil à la raison, qu'elles desarment la vertu, et luy font perdre la poursuite de ses desseins: Et on ne void pas que ce desordre procede du defaut de l'amour de Dieu, comme les langveurs arrivent en la Nature par l'eclypse du Soleil, et les seditions dedans les Estats par l'absence de ceux qui les gouvernoient. Que l'homme ayme Dieu, admirant les merveilles de ses oeuvres dans la Nature, voyant tous les jours les traits de sa Providence en l'œconomie du monde, se laissant conduire aux lumieres interieures, aux attraits de graces, et aux sentimens de pieté qu'il imprime au coeur, il iouyra d'une paix qui passe tout ce que nostre imagination se peut figurer d'heureux. Le monde luy paroist tout autre qu'à l'ordinaire : il respire un air plus doux, comme au sortir d'une maladie, et à l'entrée du Printemps ; il luy semble qu'il se soit fait un renouvellement general de la Nature, et il le figure dedans les choses le changement qui s'est fait en luy. Rien ne le choque, mais tout flate ses sentimens, tout s'accorde à son humeur ; à cause de l'extreme deference qu'il rend à la Sagesse qui l'ordonne, ou qui le permet ainsi : et vous diriez qu'il iouysse du privilege de la Nature superieure exempte de contrarieté.

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